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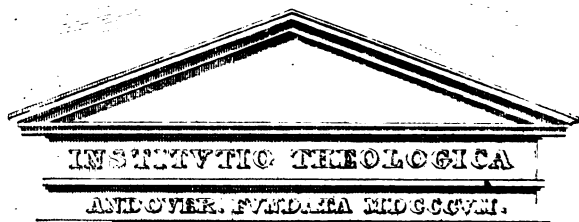
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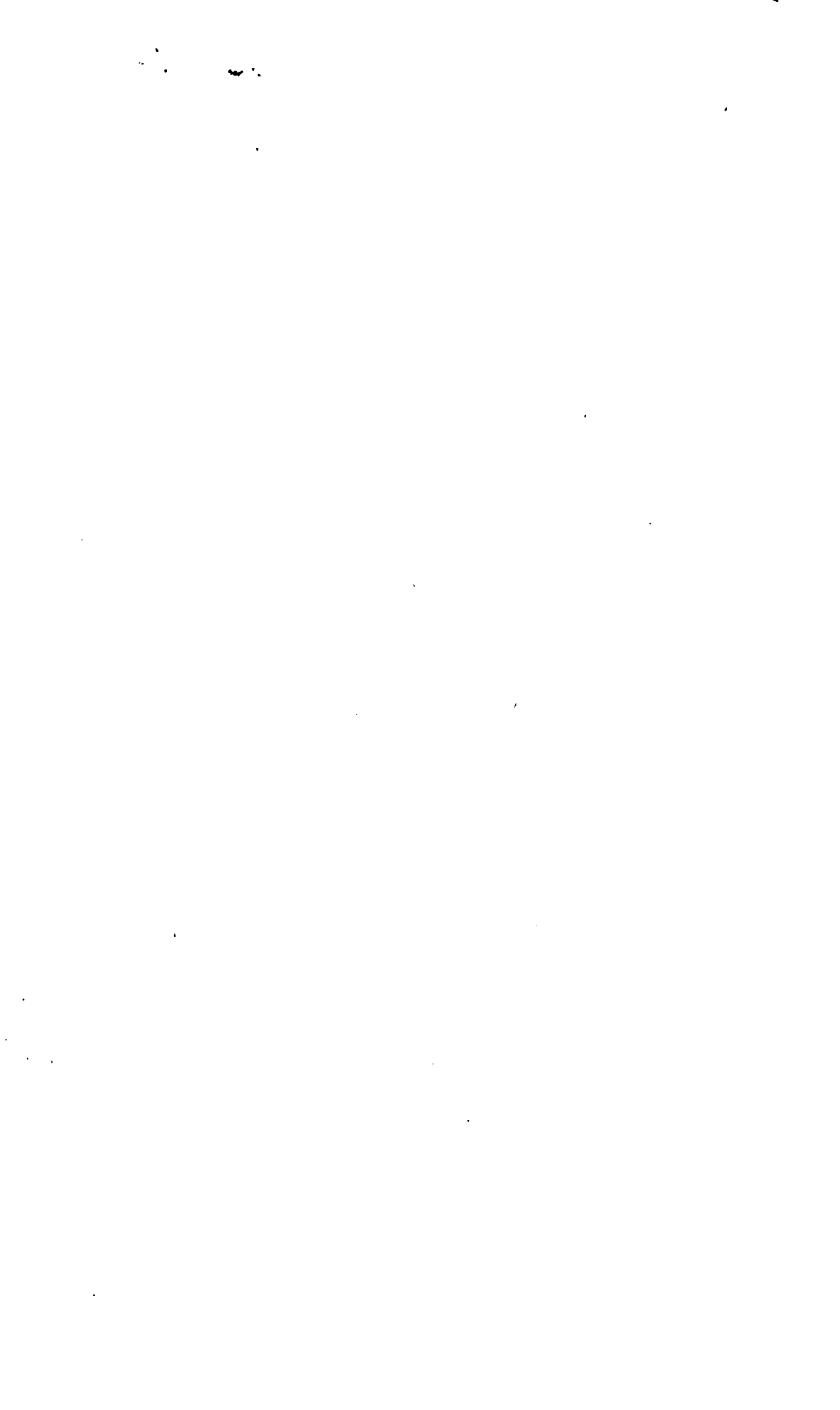
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**LECTURES**  
**AND**  
**SERMONS.**

**IN TWO VOLUMES.**

**BY HENRY C. KNIGHT, A. M.**

**A Priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church.**

**VOLUME II.**

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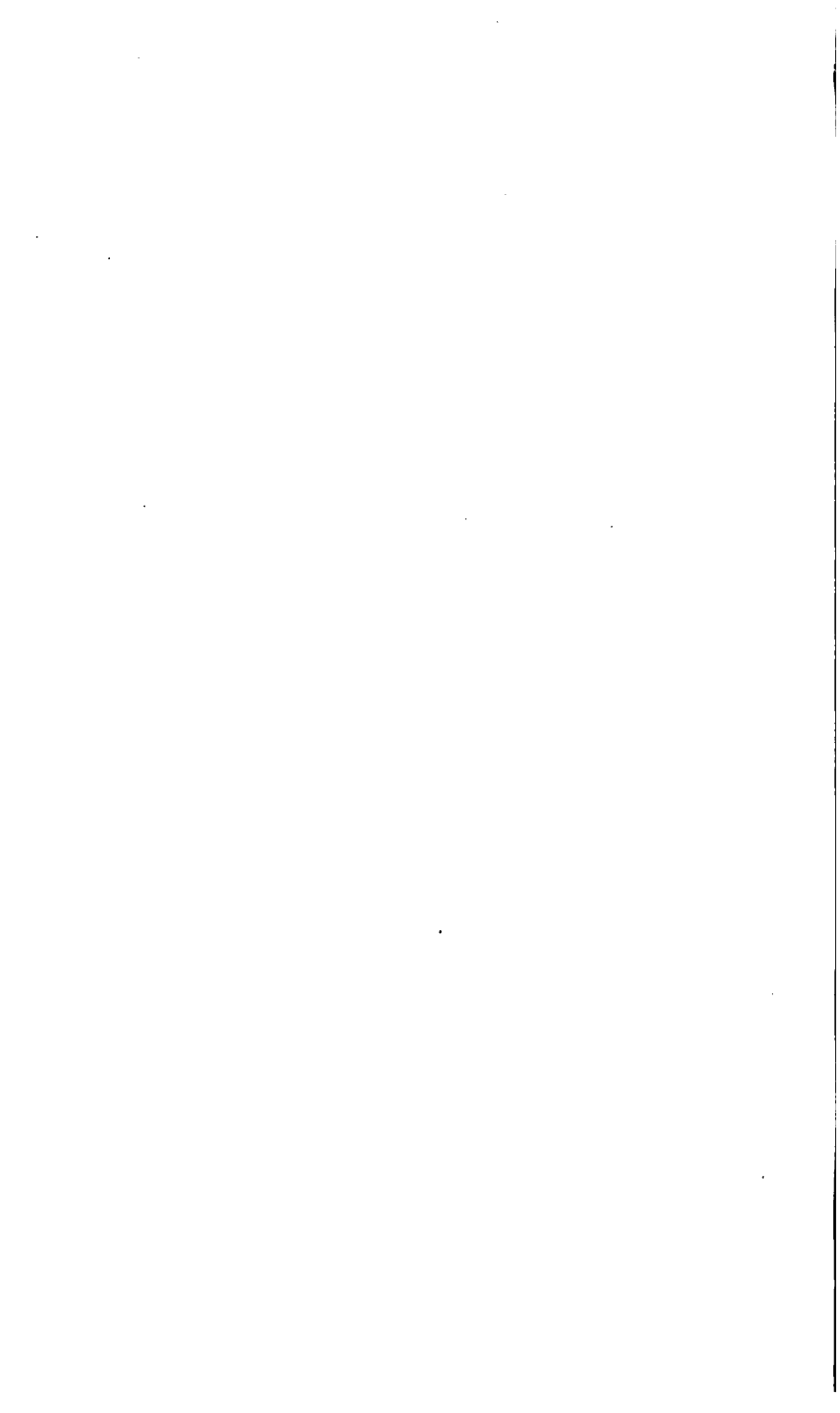
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# THE MOUNTAIN SERMON.

## SERMONS XXIX AND XXX.

*St Matth. v, 3 — 10. — THE EIGHT BEATITUDES.*

ABOUT eighteen hundred years ago, the greatest Preacher, that ever appeared on this earth, went up into a Mountain, in the Holy Land, followed by vast crowds of hearers. There was something awful, and mysterious, and sublime, and affectionate, in the character of this Preacher. His age was about thirty years, and his raiment a garment without a seam. He was never known to laugh, but he sometimes wept. Instead of feasting, he once fasted for forty days. Instead of a palace, he had not where to lay his head. When he looked, a more than human glory spread over his face ; and when he spake, he spake as never man spake. Although cruelly reviled, he went about doing good. And although he once called out of his grave a friend, who had been dead four days, he yielded up his own life as a martyr for the souls of his followers. This great Preacher, surrounded by his vast congregation, of saints and sinners, of believers and infidels, of critics and admirers, went up into a Mountain ; and there, in a church not made with hands, with the heavens over his head — those heavens, from which he came down, and to which he returned — in a solemn, consolatory manner, he pronounced blessed *eight virtues and trials*, each of which his followers must possess, or be willing to endure.

### FOUR FIRST BEATITUDES.

1. First, said this heavenly Preacher : *Blessed are the poor in spirit ; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*



Did the Preacher intend the natural, inborn temper ? No. Mere spontaneous affection can call for neither praise, nor dispraise. But can it be, that this divine Preacher pronounced blessed, a low, servile, abject, grovelling disposition in man ? A spirit, too low for emulation, too servile for honour, too abject for enterprise, and too grovelling for virtue ? Far from it. Emulation in a good cause is praiseworthy ; honour among just men is desirable ; enterprise in an honest vocation is a duty ; and virtue is the seed of religion. Never does being poor in spirit, require one to be poor-spirited. Oh, no ! The terms are not convertible. What then did this Preacher to the hearts mean, when he taught, Blessed are the poor in spirit ? He meant, Blessed is that spirit, which lifteth not itself ; that spirit which, when afflicted, feels that troubles do not spring from the ground, but are ministering angels sent to wean us from the world ; that spirit, which is unrepining, and although our lot be cast in low estate, sends up the morning and evening sacrifice of contentment and thanks ; that spirit which is stripped of all self-complacency ; which feels the bitterness of its own heart, and that its own strength is weakness, and its own fulness is emptiness.

That such is the poorness of spirit, which is rich before God, we are assured in that Book, which is the record of truth. God saith, If my people shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways ; then will I hear from heaven, and forgive their sins. Better is it to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. A man's pride shall bring him low, but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit. God saith, Because thine heart was tender, I have heard thee. And when the Spirit of God was upon Isaiah, it sent him, to bind up the broken hearted. But to be more particular.

The Rich Man, he who is clothed in purple, and fares sumptuously every day ; who pulls down his warehouses to build larger, and whose ships bring home gold from Ophir ; must come out from among his riches, with raiment for the naked, with food for the hungry, and with succour for the distressed ; and clothe himself in depend-

ance, in gratitude, and in this poorness of spirit ; before he can hope to be one of the kingdom of heaven.

The Man of Titles, he who is ranked among the excellent of the earth, and before whom boweth the knee of obeisance ; who is an eloquent man in the council of his nation, and who sitteth upon the bench of justice ; must himself bend down before the One, who is higher than he, and plead for mercy, in this poorness of spirit.

The Man of Wisdom, he who can speak all tongues, and can foretel the signs of the times ; whose mind can walk down among the ruins of buried ages, or mount upward to track the marches of the planets ; must be dumb in ignorance, and feel in this poorness of spirit, that without the teaching of the Spirit of Truth, he is but of yesterday, and knows nothing.

The Beauty of Fashion, she in whose cheek is the freshening tint of the morning, and in whose eye is the dewy softness of heaven ; she whose presence is greeted by the rivalry of admirers, and whose heart is throbbing with the emotions of desire ; she must feel that, as to her body, 'a heap of dust is all she is, and all the proud shall be ;' and that virtue alone will give her that beauty of the soul, which will bloom beyond the grave.

Such is the poorness of spirit, which is pronounced blessed ; and which any of you can have, and need to have, before you can hope for the happy benediction, that yours is the kingdom of heaven.

2. Again said this divine Preacher : *Blessed are they that mourn ; for they shall be comforted.*

The World says, Blessed are they, who do not mourn. We have seen a man at a feast, sitting jovial among his fellows, his palate pleased with viands of rich odours, and his heart mellowed with old wine ; and have heard him cry aloud in his glee, Eat, drink, and be merry. Now he raises the full chorus of song, and now he joins in the giddy mazes of the dance. And was not that man happy ? Jesus did not say, Blessed is the man at a feast. And the Wise Man knew, that boisterous joys but drown useful reflection ; that the pleasures of this world work a snare ; that they are indeed sweet in prospect, but bitter,

or at best heartless, in possession ; that they leave an aching void in the breast. Therefore, he said, It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting.

And can it be better to go, where all is grief, and lamentation ? Let us leave the sound of the viol, and listen to the slow, solemn tolling of the bell — it tells of a passing soul. Let us go to the house of mourning, and see what is there. Death hath entered the house. There stands the father, like afflicted David of old, and cries, My son, my son, would to God I had died for thee, my son, my son ! There sits the mother, like weeping Rachel, and sobs, as one that mourneth for her only child, refusing to be comforted, because she is not. And can it be good, to go to such a house ? And can it be true, that blessed are they that mourn ? The Preacher did not mean, that sorrow of man, which is without hope ; nor that sorrow of the world, that worketh death. He did not mean, that grief because our joys are lessened ; or that sorrow which follows on the cutting down of earthly ambition. He intended that mourning, which maketh the heart better. This lesson can be best learnt in the house of mourning. Here a voice speaks from the grave, saying, Mortals, the time is short. You have a great work to perform, and but a little time to do it in ; and that little time daily growing less. It tells us, that death came by sin. It warns us, to take light thought for the body, which is to return to its original dust ; but to be up and doing for the soul, which is to return to be judged by God, who gave it. That, though time is short, eternity is long ; and that, as our deeds in time, so will be our award in eternity.

But when Jesus said, Blessed are they that mourn ; he especially meant, they who mourn over their sins. That brokenness of heart for sin, that tenderness of conscience to the truth, that godly sorrow that worketh true repentance. Who is there among us can say, he hath no sin ? And every sin is a defect in some duty, or a breach of some law ; and every such defect, or breach, exposes the soul to the wrath of God, unless mourned for with tears. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep, says James ; let your

laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. And says David, O Lord, I will praise thee, though thou art angry with me. For, day and night, thy hand was heavy upon me; I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquities of my sins.' The burthened soul must look on Him, whom he hath pierced, and cry aloud, Lord, I am oppressed, undertake thou for me. They who sow in tears, shall reap in joy. Jesus shall cast all their sins behind their back. He will say, Ye now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again; and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. This mourning for sin should be early in life, and while in health; before the angel of sickness shall lay us on the bed of death. For the dead cannot praise God, says holy David; the dead cannot celebrate thee; the living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day. Then, when Jesus shall say to the Man at the Feast, Son, remember that thou, in thy life time, receivedst thy good things; he will say to the humble mourner over his sins, Come, thou blessed, where there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain; enter into peace. If you thus mourn, because of your sins, Jesus hath said, Ye shall be comforted.

3. Again said this celestial Preacher: *Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.*

The virtue of meekness is not that of the quietness of sloth, a supine love of ease, a defect in sensibility and firmness, and the predominancy of other passions. This meekness means not that timid and pliant temper, which is inactive to do good, and indifferent to do evil. Neither is it a mere constitutional virtue, not grounded upon principle. It must be that evangelical meekness, which with God is before honour. This meekness is opposed to a spirit of revenge, to a spirit of haughtiness, to a spirit of impatience. It is that meekness, which softens the heart to mercy; renders it gentle to all around us, and below us; forbearing towards those, who injure us; forgiving towards those, who are not willing to forgive us; and submissive to the trials of Providence. It is a virtue, which

was unknown to the heathen; and which was never suspected to be a virtue, before the Gospel of Truth revealed it so to be. It is a virtue, which is opposed to the carnal heart, and must be sought for with prayer. This meekness of spirit is able to subdue the native outbursts of the irascible, and the implacable. This spirit itself is happiness. Blessed are the meek, said the blessed Jesus, who was himself meek, and lowly in heart.

What a lesson to Ambition ! What a lesson to human Pride ! He, who could say to the noisy seas, Peace, be still ! and they were still ; He, who could command ten legions of angels to minister unto him ; He was himself of a meek and quiet spirit. Blessed are his followers in this virtue, for they shall inherit the earth. Yes, even in this life, this virtue shall bring its own reward. It is this temper, which avoids strife among neighbours ; which shuns the fierce litigations of law ; and which conquers by forbearance ; which, by rendering good for evil, heaps coals of fire upon the head of the adversary. Such a temper does not imply any pusillanimity of spirit, which will not assert its rights with firmness, and maintain them with manliness ; but only such as goeth out of the way of contention, and dareth not to vent its heart in murmurs of revenge. Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you ? Let him show out of a good conversation his works, with meekness of wisdom. Put on the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. The Lord lifteth up the meek. He will beautify the meek with salvation ; his soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the earth.

A person of this gospel virtue, when he looks abroad, and sees the comforts that the Lord has spread before him ; a good home, daily food, agreeable friends ; and above all, the free and easy offers of pardon of sin, upon his humbling himself before the cross ; and then looks back into his own breast, and finds there so little contrition for sin, so little faith in God, so little trust in a Saviour, he feels meek ; he feels as if he could get low in the dust of humiliation ; he feels that he desires no revenge then, but against sin ; no ambition, but to sit at the feet of

Jesus; no cravings, but to inherit, after his earthly pilgrimage is over, a portion in the holy land of promise above.

In this world, meekness is but an unfashionable virtue; and those humble Christians, who possess it, are too often despised. But there is another world, in which those, who were meek on earth, shall be exalted. Then will the poor man, with this virtue, who sits all day long by the river-side, and toils, but catches nothing, rise above the man without it, who sits over his coffers, counting his untold thousands. Then will the poor woman with this virtue, who with feeble hands gathers a few faggots by the wayside, be seated above the matron without it, who parades up and down the hanging gardens of her palace. Then will the devout pilgrim, who has vanquished his own heart by this virtue, be a greater conqueror in heaven, than he, who on earth conquered one world, and whose proud heart then wept, that he had not another to conquer. And then the poor publican, who stood afar off, and smote upon his breast, and cried, God, be merciful to me a sinner, will be justified, rather than the proud Pharisee, who stood in the corner of the street, and boasted, Lord, I thank thee, that I am not like other men.

4. Again said this godlike Preacher : *Blessed are they, who do hunger and thirst after righteousness ; for they shall be filled.*

How different this, from the common hunger and thirst of the world. Look around in our towns, and see what most people are hungering and thirsting after ; and see, whether they are filled.

One man wishes to heap together a great estate; that he may live in independence, and leave a fortune to his children. Let him be rich as Cræsus — Is he filled?

Another man burns to be elected to some official eminence; that his head may reach high above his equals. Let him be high as Cæsar — Is he filled?

Another strives to fill the chambers of his brain with all the learning of the East; that Ignorance may say, Surely, wisdom shall die with him. Let him be sage as Socrates — Is he filled?

Wealth is good, if used with moderation and benefi-

cence. Fame is good, if honestly acquired, and it puffeth not up. And Learning is good, if usefully applied, and the heart be not left uncultured. But neither of these, nor all of these, can fill the soul.

No! Before the soul can be filled, it must hunger and thirst after righteousness. So said the blessed Jesus, and he alone knew what would satisfy it. The soul must long, as did praying David's: As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth, for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God. For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness. Thou hast put gladness into my heart, more than in the time, that the corn and the wine increased. And said he, whose meat and whose drink it was to do the will of his heavenly Father, Blessed are ye, that hunger now, for ye shall be filled. Wo unto you that are full, for ye shall hunger. Wherefore do ye spend money for that, which is not bread, and your labour for that, which satisfieth not? I am the bread of life; he that eateth of this bread, shall live forever. Whoso drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst.

Instead of the Wealth of this poor fading world, the soul must crave, and toil, and pray for, that treasure in the heavens, which neither time, nor death, can corrupt.

Instead of Eminence on earth, the soul of man must aspire, with abasement of heart, and humiliation of mind, after a seat at Christ's right hand, in his heavenly kingdom.

Instead of human Learning, the mind must covet that wisdom, which is from above, and which will rectify the heart of its errors.

Instead of turning aside to disport with the Graces and Loves, on the rosebeds of Pleasure, in the groves of Dissipation; the immortal soul should reach after the fruits of the Tree of Life, which stands in the midst of the celestial Eden.

Whoever hath this hunger and thirst shall be filled. However poor, or sick, or dejected, in this world of wo; the loaves and fishes of comfort shall be multiplied; and

the cruise of the oil of consolation shall not fail; and even the poor widow may buy this food with her two mites. Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to this fountain of righteousness. God hath prepared it. Jesus Christ hath opened it. It will cool your parched tongues, and refresh your souls. Come ye, in faith, for ye shall be filled.

#### FOUR LAST BEATITUDES.

5. Furthermore, said the divine Preacher on the Mount: *Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.*

By the virtue of mercy is meant kindness, compassion; a propensity to remove, or alleviate the miseries of mankind; an unwillingness to increase our own gratifications by making others unhappy; and a readiness to yield up a part of our own comforts, to render others more easy. It implies an aversion to any thing, in word or deed, which is unfeeling or oppressive. This virtue must not be merely an instinctive impulse to kindness, an amiable trait in our natural dispositions; but it must have respect to the law of God, to a sense of duty, and of our own daily dependence. It must be prompted by righteous motives, and directed to proper ends. It must be uniform in its exercise, and extended not only to our equals, but to our dependants; not only to our friends, but to our enemies. What say the maxims of wisdom? Do yourselves a kindness, by charity. Forgive every man's fault, except your own. Better suffer a great evil, than do a little one. Living well is the best revenge we can take on our enemies. It is a mark of great proficiency, to bear easily the failings of other men. He that would have a good revenge, let him leave it to God. But to illustrate the virtue of mercy by example.

If we have a servant, who has been guilty of some fault, and he cometh, and it repenteth him of his error, and he seeketh reconciliation, we must say unto him, Go in peace, for this time, and sin no more. For, said Jesus to the hard master, Shouldest not thou have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee?



If we have a neighbour in distress for food, for raiment, for money, for a home, or in sickness; we should remember that it is written, He that despiseth the poor sinneth, but he that hath mercy on the poor, happy is he. And, he that hath pity on the poor, lendeth unto the Lord, and that which he hath given, will he pay him again.

If we have a poor debtor, whose heart is willing, but whose hands are weak; who says, have patience with me, I pray thee, and I will pay thee all; we must, if we are not able to forgive him the debt, wait patiently until his change come. Else, how can we pray, Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

If, in our travels, we meet with a man wounded by the way-side, we must not, like the Priest and Levite, come and look on, and pass by on the other side, but, like the good Samaritan, we must bind up his wounds; and if he be far from his kindred, set him upon our own beast, and remove him to a place, where they will minister unto him.

If we have in our possession the noble spirited and willing horse, to bear us upon our journies; or the patient and laborious ox, to turn up the furrow on our farms; we should remember, that the same Bible, that says, man was made lord over the beast of the field, says also, that the merciful man is merciful to his beast. As the spirit of the beast goeth downward to the earth, how unjust is it, to deprive him of some comfort in this, his only short life. We should reflect, how more faithful is the beast to his earthly master, than is man to his heavenly Master; and that when he does wrong, it is from ignorance; but when we do wrong, it is against great knowledge.

Thus I have defined, and exemplified to you, the virtue of mercy. But my voice is weak, without the sanction of divine truth. Such sanction beams from every page of that Holy Book, which is all Judgment and Mercy. In one place, it says, Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble; he shall be blessed upon the earth; the Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing, and will make all his bed in his sickness. In another place, The merciful man doeth good to his own soul; but he that is cruel troubleth his own flesh. In another, Is not this the fast that I have chosen, to

loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burthens, and to let the oppressed go free; is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor, that are cast out, to thy house; then the Lord shall satisfy thy soul. . Again, Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another. And again, Love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great.

Now if any one have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eye of the widow to fail; or have eaten his meat himself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; if he have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; let him ponder on what follows: But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, how dwelleth the love of God in him? And let him reflect, that he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath showed no mercy. But let the merciful rejoice, that God is not unrighteous, to forget his labours of love; for, says David, I have been young, and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. And that, with the merciful, God will show himself merciful.

And now, I would ask, can it be, that among men, who need so much mercy themselves; there should be found any, who are not willing to show mercy unto others?

6. Again said this holy Preacher: *Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.*

It is one thing to be pure in life, and another thing to be pure in heart; one thing to be pure before men, and quite another thing to be pure before God. A man may keep all the exterior commands of the Moral Law; he may worship no graven image; he may not outwardly take the name of the Lord in vain; he may not forget to go up to the courts of the Lord on the Sabbath day; he may honour his father and his mother; he may not kill, nor be unchaste, nor steal, nor bear false witness against his neighbour; he may do none of these things, and may be accounted among men as a very good Christian: And yet, he may not love God; he may bow down his heart before an earthly idol; he may profane the Lord's day

with lip-service ; he may look after unholy objects ; and may secretly covet his neighbour's prosperity. He may have no truth in the inward parts. His mind and conscience may be defiled. He may profess to know God, but in works of the heart may deny him, being disobedient. Such an one was likened by Him, who looked through the lips into the naked breast, to a whited sepulchre ; which indeed appears beautiful without, but is within full of all uncleanness. A man may pass before men for a saint, and yet pass before God as an hypocrite.

Blessed are the pure in heart — how simple ! how reasonable ! God requireth of us, no lamb to smoke upon the altar ; no incense to steam from the censer ; no weary pilgrimage to a prophet's shrine ; no bloody penance upon our bodies ; no long prayers in the market places ; no almsgivings for priestly absolution. No. Bring no more vain oblations. God desireth mercy, and not sacrifice. He saith, My son, give me thine heart. One tear of repentance for sin ; one sigh of regret over the desolations of the fall ; one aspiration after holiness ; these alone are the offerings, which the Saviour will bear to his Father in heaven, as coming from the pure in heart.

Hear what holy David says. David, that eminent sinner, and that eminent saint. That man, who was led away, by his human passions, to fall into great sins ; but who was led back again, by his humbled heart, to bemoan himself in dust and ashes. He says, I know, O God, that thou triest the heart. And his prayer for Solomon was, that God would give him a perfect heart to keep his commandments. In another place, he says, With the pure, thou wilt show thyself pure ; and with the froward, thou wilt show thyself froward. For truly, God is good to such as are of a clean heart. Again, he asks, Who shall stand in thine holy place ? he that hath clean hands, and a pure heart ; who hath not lift up his soul into vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. And at last, with a holy zeal, and with a feeling sense of the treachery and desperate wickedness of the carnal heart, he cries, Create in me a new heart, O God ; and renew a right spirit within me.

Unto those, whose souls are sustained by faith, and whose evil natures are corrected by a conformity to divine

truth, Christ hath said, Blessed are ye, for ye shall see God.

7. Again said this sacred Preacher : *Blessed are the peacemakers ; for they shall be called the children of God.*

Blessed are the peacemakers, said the great Peacemaker of Souls. The kingdom of Heaven is all peace.

Blessed is the man, who is willing to go out to meet his neighbour, who has offended him ; and can say with royal David, If ye be come peaceably unto me, my heart shall be knit unto you. Who considers, that to render good for evil is Godlike.

Blessed is the man, who endeavours to promote peace in his own family. Behold, how good, and how pleasant a thing it is, for brethren to dwell together in unity. And where envying, and strife is, there is confusion, and every evil work.

Blessed are the men, who seek for peace in their own towns. Who as much as in them lieth, without becoming busy bodies in other men's matters, strive to prevent, or curtail, all feuds and lawsuits. Who by soft words do away wrath. Now, says St Paul, there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law with one another. Let nothing be done through strife, or vainglory ; but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than themselves. And again, Forgiving one another ; endeavouring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Blessed are the peacemakers in churches. Those who seek not to gender vain disputations ; and who are ready to deny themselves in those things, which make a weak brother to offend. Those who put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness ; knowing that love is the fulfilling of the law ; and that the fruits of the Spirit are love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance. Brethren, be of one mind, live in peace ; and the God of peace shall be with you. When we are disposed to censure another, let us consider ourselves well, and we shall be silent. When Christians gainsay one another, then do infidels triumph. When Christians live together in harmony, then do even blasphemers exclaim in wonder, Behold, how they love one another.

Blessed are the peacemakers among nations. Blessed is that monarch, who delights not in the sound of battle, and in garments rolled in blood ; whose ambition is not to count his thousands weltering in their gore, and his tens of thousands taken captive ; but whose labour is, to beat his swords into ploughshares, and his spears into pruning hooks ; and whose ambition is, that his subjects may sit under their own vines, and their own fruit trees, having none to molest, or to make them afraid. How humbling to the haughty crest of the Hero, that He, who could command the Armies of Heaven, hath said, Blessed are the peacemakers. That to Him, the extended hand of friendship should be more glorious, than the triumphing sword in the grasp of the conqueror.

But above all, Blessed, yea, thrice-blessed, are those, who are peacemakers with their own souls. Who for this end are slow to wrath, knowing that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Who overcome evil with good. Who avenge not themselves. What man is he, that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good ? Keep then thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile ; depart from evil, and do good ; seek peace, and pursue it. Is there not need enough, that we should make overtures of peace with our own souls ? Doth not conscience accuse us of an evil heart of unbelief ? Of hatred, or indifference, towards God ? Of opening afresh the wounds of our Saviour ? Of resisting the motions of the Holy Spirit ? How awful the thought, that if we do not make peace with our souls in time, the Adversary will be at war with them through all eternity.

Let us therefore, among neighbours, in our families, in our towns, in our churches, in the councils of the nation, and above all with our own souls ; let us follow the things, which make for peace, that we may be called the children of God.

8. Lastly, said this divine Preacher: *Blessed are they, which are persecuted for righteousness' sake ; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

It must be a very evil world, in which men are perse-

cuted for being good. But it is too true, that the wicked hate the Law, and the book which holds it; they hate the Gospel, and those who defend it. The wicked envy Christians, and their malice accuses them of fanaticism, or bigotry; of weakness, or hypocrisy; of spiritual pride, and misanthropy. But this passing world is a world of probation; this tempting world, but a trial of our faith. Therefore, says James, my brethren, count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. And again, If any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but commit his soul unto God in well doing. And says Paul, Be willing, not only to believe, but also to suffer, for Christ's sake. The wicked, says David, plotteth against the just; but the Lord shall laugh at him, for he seeth that his day is coming. And says Christ, Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and shall cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake; for your reward is great in heaven. Ye shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, and in the world to come eternal life. And in the Vision of John the Divine, in the Islet of Patmos, when the Angel asked, What be these arrayed in white robes? and John answered, Sir, thou knowest; the Angel said unto him, These be they, which came out of great tribulation.

In every age, good men have been liable to be persecuted for righteousness' sake. Look back among the patriarchs, and hear the blood of righteous Abel cry from the ground; and see youthful Joseph sold by his own brethren as a bond-slave. Look among the prophets, and hear faithful Daniel in the grim lions' den; and behold the Three Worshipers of the true God in the burning fiery furnace. Then come down, and review the perils by day, and the perils by night, of that champion of the truth, Saint Paul; and the banishment, to an Island in the Sea, of the beloved disciple John. Then read of hundreds of others of the noble army of martyrs, of whom the world was not worthy; against whom did false witnesses rise up, and laid things to their charge that they knew not; and who were taken away from the evil to

come. Last, raise your eyes to the bleeding, dying love of Him, who was lifted up between the heavens and the earth, as if unfit for either; and who, while sublimely agonized he hung, did nothing but pray for his murderers, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.

Blessed be God! in our good Land, a Christian sees not the grated bars of the inquisition of Bigotry, nor the bloody falling-axe of Atheism. Yet, while this world is our home, Christians must expect to meet, at times, with the malice of the Infidel, and the sneers of the Libertine. But, though mocked, like holy Elisha of old, we must not call down fire from heaven. Though doomed, like God's servant Job, to scrape away with a shard the angry pustules of Satan, we must not curse God. We should rather, mourn over the plagues of our own hearts. Being reviled, we should bless; being persecuted, we should suffer it; being troubled on every side, we should not be distressed; being perplexed, yet should we not despair; knowing that He, who raised up the Lord Jesus, can raise up us also, and will be present with us; for which cause, we should faint not. Be thou faithful unto death. Blessed is the man, that endureth unto the end. Remembering that, in all these things, we shall be more than conquerors, through Him, that loved us. Blessed be God! who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### APPLICATION.

Brethren and Sisters in the Church of our common Lord. What the Preacher from Heaven proclaimed, eighteen hundred years ago, on the Mount, in the Holy Land, is true, on this day, in our land. Time cannot weaken the Force of Truth.

*Four First.* — If, therefore, any of you are poor in spirit, seeking not the perishable vanities of this world, but after more durable riches above; Jesus hath said, Ye are blessed, for yours is the kingdom of heaven.

If any of you are mourning, because death hath enter-

ed your dwelling, or over the desolations of sin in your own hearts, and ye mourn after a godly sort ; to you, Jesus hath said, Ye shall be comforted.

If any of you are meek, having that humility of temper, which becometh the follower of Him, who was meek and lowly in spirit ; Jesus hath promised, that ye shall inherit the earth.

If any of you are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, more than after fame, or honour, or wealth, or pleasure ; Jesus hath said, Ye shall be filled.

*Four Last.* — If any of you are merciful, both to your equals and inferiors, to your debtors and your enemies, to the wayfaring man and his beast ; Jesus hath declared, Ye shall obtain mercy.

If any of you are pure in heart, not mocking the Lord with lip-service, while the heart is far from him ; Jesus hath said, that you shall see God.

If any of you are peace-makers, among neighbours and townsmen, in the church and the senate-house, and especially with your own souls ; Jesus hath said, Ye shall be called the children of God.

Finally, If any of you are persecuted for righteousness' sake ; if any of you have to encounter the fiery darts of the Adversary, as you pass along the road of christian duty ; to you, Jesus has promised, that yours is the kingdom of heaven.



# NATURE OF REPENTANCE.

## SERMON XXXI.

*Acts* iii, 19. — REPENT YE, THEREFORE, AND BE CONVERTED,  
THAT YOUR SINS MAY BE BLOTTED OUT.

[Some thoughts due to Bishop Jeremy Taylor.]

I TAKE it for granted, that we all need repentance. I assume the fact. We all feel it ; deeply feel it. And if we do not, the whole Bible states, and proves it. If it did not, it would not, on almost every page, in both the Old and in the New Testaments equally ; from Genesis to Malachi, and from Matthew to Revelation ; be exhorting, and entreating, and commanding us, and every soul that is born to die, and go to judgment, *To repent, and be converted, that our sins may be blotted out.*

Repentance and Faith make up the sum of Christian duty. Repentance is one half ; faith is the other half. *Repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.* Indeed, they go together, and grow together. They cannot exist apart. If one precede the other, yet they are twin-born ; and twins they will live, and twins they will die. But postponing now the discussion of the Nature and Triumphs of Faith ; it will be my aim, to explain and enforce the Nature and Duties of Repentance.

I now proceed to explain, under several distinct heads, the Nature and Effects of that true Repentance, which is enjoined by the zealous *Saint Peter*.

1. Repentance implies a deep *sorrow*. Not a little moisture of the outward eye, not a little heaving of the outward breast, to be seen and heard of men. Not a

mere crying, Lord, Lord, with the outward lips. Not the mere chattering like a swallow, but the moaning like a dove. Not a sorrow for the present or coming retribution of sin only, for then is hell crowded with true penitents. We must be sorrowful, not like Cain, when his punishment was greater than he could bear ; not like Saul, when he heard the lowing of the oxen ; not like Judas, when he went out and hanged himself : but with the wailing of a mourning Jeremiah ; with the heartbreakings of a guilty David ; with the scalding tears of a fallen Peter. We must be filled with a bitterness of soul, with a weeping day and night ; this is the first cry of that repentance, which needeth not to be repented of. It must be a sorrow, that will make us uneasy and contrite, because we have broken our duty, and offended our God. Because we have cast a forgetfulness toward our Saviour. It must be a sorrow, that will lead us to condemn ourselves, and make us feel worthy of stripes ; that will make us hate sin, and be willing to mortify ourselves ; that will clothe our souls in sackcloth, and make us cry, God be merciful to me a sinner. It must be a sorrow, that will work upon the spirit, and bring down our affections to our duty. A sorrow, that will throw cold water upon the fire of our lusts ; level the hills of our pride ; and hand us the scrip and staff, for the bags of our covetousness. A sorrow, that will lead us to bear patiently the rod of God. That will make us feel, that we are not worthy to lift up so much as our eyes to heaven. That will lead us to crucify every passion, that warreth against the soul. That will rend our heart, and not our garments. That will search and try our ways. That will make us be afflicted, and mourn, and weep. That will let the whole head be sick, and the whole heart faint. That will put our mouth in the dust, if so be there may be hope. It must be a sorrow, that will cause one to say to himself, *Thou art the man ;* and to cry to God, *Against thee, thee only, have I sinned.* We should be sorry, that we cannot be more sorry. And we should beg of God, to continue this sorrow, until it works its salutary end.

But, after all, simple sorrow is not repentance of sin. It is but the natural, and promising harbinger to it. For

godly sorrow *worketh* repentance. Sorrow is the parent, repentance is the child ; and the child too in its veriest infancy ; and it has much to do, before it can increase, and grow into favour both with God and man.

2. Sorrow, we said, is but the first part of Repentance. This alone will not do. There must follow a *total relinquishment of sin*. This sorrow must produce conversion ; that turning about of the heart, as the word implies, which will cause a turning about of our lives from sin, and the dark lanes of sin. Else it is not a godly sorrow. Conviction of sin is nothing, without a conversion from sin. It is not a casting out of some great sins less inviting, for an indulgence of others more easily besetting. It is not a commuting of one sin for another sin. It is not the emptying of one basket of the fruits of unrighteousness, to fill another with the like from the same tree. It is a formal, peremptory, and absolute reprobation, and abandonment of *all sin* ; of every sin, whether of head or heart ; of thought, speech, or action ; overt or covert. We must make clean our raiment, and hate even the garment spotted by the flesh. We must not taste, nor reach after, nor look towards, nor ever long after, the apples of Sodom. We must bring every sin to the altar, and slay it before God, and before the people. To win the graces, we must slay the vices. We must not only slay every sin, but must cover it with the pall of mourning, and shed over it the tears of contrition ; not that it is dead, but that it ever lived ; and then bury it out of our sight, in the lowest deep of humility, that it may no more rise in judgment against us. What say the Scriptures ? Wash you, and make you clean. Make you a new heart, and a new spirit. Come out from among them, and be ye separate. Amend your ways, and your doings. Break off thy sins by righteousness. Touch not the unclean thing. Touch not, taste not, handle not. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners ; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions ; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper ; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. We may weep, and we may fast, and we may pray, and we may condemn ourselves ;

but unless we at the same time endeavour to fight against, and to crush, and, as it were, to annihilate our sins, and our sinful propensities ; it will avail nothing. It will be but as a deceptive hypocrisy ; an awful mockery of God, and his Gospel. But to a timely, a godly sorrow, God will ever add the grace of a holy resolution.

But this relinquishment of sin must not be only temporary, but *permanent*. Let your sin be ever before you. Else, each sin, after such a sorrow and resolution, will but be a heavier weight to sink the soul into a deeper judgment. We do not really repent, unless we from the very inmost soul wish, that we had never done the sin ; and not merely not intend to do it again. It will not do, only to decline sin, until our appetite for sin returns. We must not enjoy the pleasures of sin, even for a season. It is when sin beckons, that we are to put to the test our good resolutions. We must abide, and persevere, in these resolutions continually. We must stand aloof, and watch against surprises, and temptations. We must fear, and love, and trust, and pray to God for his strengthening mercy, to enable us to withstand—and withstand—and withstand, all the insidious arts, and fiery darts, and deadly machinations, of the adversary ; and having done all, to stand—stand firmly, immoveably, with our feet planted on the chief corner stone of our Faith and our Hope, for a defence and protection. For, without the divine arm, we are as a kid against the tiger, as a feather against the wind. Our ferocious and opposing passions will conquer us. We must, therefore, ever vigilantly watch and pray, lest our feet slide on the slippery places.

3. But abandonment of sin alone will never do. This is but one half of Repentance. We must also be *active in duty*. We must not only repent, and turn to God, but must do works meet for repentance. We must awake to righteousness. We must not only cease to do evil, but must learn to do well ; not only be callous against the influence of evil, but be quickened into the performance of good. We must not only escape from the dominion of lust, but be up and doing in the train of virtue. We must go forth to plant and to water, in the vineyard of the Lord ; and run and toil to gather in his harvests. We must be on the

lookout, lest we go astray from his fold. We must not only do good, but must encourage good in others. Suppose, by a long course of circumspection, and mortification, we have conquered our evil habits; yet all this, I repeat, will be but one half of repentance. That resolve only is the evidence of a holy penitence, which ripens into action, and whose actions are fruitful in a reformed life. We must add to our faith all the Christian virtues, and the Christian graces. These things must not only be in us, but must abound. In fine, true repentance will produce conversion; and conversion will require, and incline us, to make an *outward and visible profession*, and *covenant*, with God, and before men.

But this activity in duty, like the relinquishment of sin, must also be *permanent*. We must prosecute unto the end. Victory is awarded, not to him that putteth *on*, but to him that putteth *off*, the harness. We must run with patience the race that is set before us. We must go forth from conquering to conquer. Blessed is he that endureth unto the death. Motives must ripen into habits. We must let the time past of our lives suffice, and more than suffice, in which to have wrought the will of the flesh. Activity in duty *for a while* will not do. Being redeemed from our vain conversation, we should serve God, in holiness and righteousness, all our days. We must not be discouraged, knowing that, in due time, we shall reap, if we faint not.

4. Is it asked, *When* we should repent and be converted? I answer, *Now*. The present time is the only time, which we can call our own. Our yesterdays are gone, and our tomorrows may never come. The work of repentance is a great work, and it therefore requires a great room to work it in. Will a man, who has a mighty task to perform during the day, put off the beginning of it until the evening? Ought not a man, who has a long journey to travel, to start early in the morning? Must not a child, who has a desire to excel in useful learning, begin betimes, if he hopes ever to accomplish his aim? And can a person subdue his old passions, eradicate his old lusts, and correct his old wicked habits, and ungodly inclinations, in a day, or a year? And even, if his life be

spared, which is very uncertain, can he better do this, when he is distracted with the increasing cares and snares of business, and become less tender in his conscience, and more hardened in his habits? And will God accept only the refuse and the impotent of his sacrifices and his affections, as his offering? And do you think, that God will wait for you, and continue waiting, until you choose to take time, and then forgive you? Dare not to trespass upon the long-suffering of God. He that lives in sin, will die in sorrow. Do not resolve to sin now, and to repent hereafter. Do you know how long you will live? Do you know, whether you may not die in the very act of sin? Will you not by delay render your heart more incapable of repenting? 'by growing more in love with sin, by remembering its pleasures, and serving it once more, and losing one degree more of the liberty of your spirit?' And if pleasant now, will it not be pleasant to sin next week, and next week after that, and so on? And still you intend to repent, when the sin can no longer please. And the longer you indulge in it, the sweeter you will taste it. And this is but saying, that when I become more enamoured of sin, I will then discard it. What presumption, what folly, what madness!

What say the Scriptures? They name no time but *to-day*. *Now* is the accepted time. Remember *now* thy Creator in the days of thy youth. *To-day*, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. God *now* commandeth all men, every where, to repent. Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found; call ye upon him, while he is near. Despise not the riches of the goodness and forbearance of God. Let the goodness of God lead thee to repentance. Quench not the Spirit. Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. Repent ye, and believe the gospel. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins. Except ye repent, ye shall all perish. *Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.*

Redeem then the time. Even he, who delays until middle age, will find many inconveniences; many infirmities to strengthen, much remaining pride to quell, many

encroachments of temptations and intemperancies, much indevotion and lukewarmness in religion; in short, he will be likely to become a very imperfect Christian. Repentance and reformation are not the work of an hour. They require a whole life, and a long life, to perform them well. It takes time and nurture, to grow up into the fullness of the stature of the perfect man in Christ Jesus. He that repents to-day, repents late enough that he did not begin yesterday. God may depart, and withdraw his aid. We may beg oil for our lamps, and be refused. The night may be at hand, and we be not saved. He only can die with composure, who has long stood waiting, with his loins girded, ready for departure.

5. Hence we learn, how ruinous it is, to defer repentance, and conversion from sin, until we are at leisure in a *sick chamber*, or have done with the world by reason of *old age*, or are warned to it on our *death beds*. We may, so may God appoint, we may never be sick; we may never be old; we may die suddenly. And if we are thus tried by sickness, or spared to old age, or laid gasping upon a death bed; how know we, that God may continue to us the use of our senses? But granting that he do, what will it avail? When a man 'has sacrificed his childhood to vanity, his youth to lust and to intemperance, his manhood to ambition and rage, pride and revenge, secular desires, and unholy actions; and yet still farther, given his old age to covetousness and oppression, to the world and the devil; after all this, what remains for God, and for religion? Oh, for that, they will do well enough; upon their death bed they will send for a priest to minister comfort to them, they will pray and ask God forgiveness, and receive the holy sacrament, and leave their goods behind them, disposing them to their friends and relatives, and some dole and issues of the alms-basket to the poor.' And thus they think they will die quietly, and be accepted as children of the heavenly kingdom. God in his mercy grant, that they do not find their mistake in another world. But we have no ground to hope for this. Will a few late tears, a few extorted prayers, wash out, and atone for, the disobedience and impiety of forty, or sixty, or eighty years? Can a man, and that in his fee-

blest estate, undo in a day, or a week, what he has been perhaps fifty or seventy years in doing, and that too in his full strength? Is it any thing to quit our evil propensities at a time, when we have no temptation to them? When our passions are dull, or indifferent, or extinct? To make war, when we have nothing to war against? To begin to live, when it is time to die? And when we cannot reduce our good purposes to action? Will God pardon the sins of a whole life, easier than the sins of our youth? We dare not then, it were madness, to defer repentance, 'till our strengths are decayed, our spirits are weak, and our lust strong; our habits confirmed, and our longings after sin many and impotent; for what is very hard to be done, and is always done imperfectly, when there is length of time, and a less work to do, and more abilities to do it withal; when the time is short, and almost expired, and the work made difficult and vast, and the strength weaker, and the faculties are disabled, will seem little less than absolutely impossible.'

But did not God save the thief upon the Cross? His case was not like ours. He probably was a Heathen, and had before never heard of Christ. But even allowing that he had before known and rejected Christ, and was saved, by the superabundant mercy of the dying Saviour, in his extremity of life; yet this example is alone. God, it has been said, hath vouchsafed us one such case, that we should never despair; and but one, that we should never presume. It is certain, that there is no warrant in Scripture for salvation offered to a death-bed repentance.

What, cannot God save a death-bed penitent? Undoubtedly he can, if he please; but will he please? Can you find any promise in Scripture, that he will? But what then must a dying sinner do? Must he neglect to do any thing for his salvation? No. God forbid. Let him do what he can. It is but little. But let not that little be left undone. It is certain, that a death-bed repentance, if not hopeless, is invalid, sick, languid, and impotent, like our dying bodies, and disabled faculties. Nor ought we to expect the eternal glories of heaven for so small a price; so short a service; so imperfect a trial. Salvation cost too much, for such admittance; a sigh or



two, or a prayer or two, or an agony of an hour or two, for the life-blood of a Saviour. For such repentance, we may well fear, there will be no place left, although we seek it carefully with tears. Instead of God's sending us then to repentance, he will send us to our grave. God has waited long ; the grave will not wait. Sins, so long encrusted, will become a second nature. Sins, so long woven and worn, must be our grave-clothes. When the sun is so far in the west, darkness must follow.

We, therefore, as ambassadors for Christ ; as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. Let us all so judge ourselves, that at the last we be not judged of the Lord. And let us do it now ; before light is taken away ; before our feet stumble upon the dark mountains of age ; before the waters of the Jordan of death rise up to meet and overwhelm us. *Repent ye, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.*

# TRIUMPHS OF FAITH.

## SERMON XXXII.

*Heb. xi, 1.* — NOW FAITH IS THE SUBSTANCE OF THINGS  
HOPED FOR, THE EVIDENCE OF THINGS NOT SEEN.

FAITH is defined to be, such a firm persuasion of the things, which God hath declared and promised, as clothes them with an evidence equal to that of sense. Faith gives a present subsistence to the future things, which are hoped for. Hope hath for its object only the things promised ; whereas, besides these, faith hath for its objects all the declarations of God concerning things not seen.

To illustrate this sentiment, the Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, devotes a whole chapter, which is itself indeed a noble and triumphant sermon, demonstrating the power of faith over the allurements and terrors of the world. In doing this, he runs through the Old Testament, as it were, and brings up before the Hebrew nation ; and out of those Scriptures, which they sacredly received as the Oracles of God ; a long array of persons, in every age, and country, who, by an unwavering faith in God, and his promises, had resisted the strongest temptations, sustained the heaviest persecutions, were preserved in imminent perils, obeyed the most difficult commands, and at length obtained the unfailing rewards of an obedient trust.

Saint Paul first tells us, that it is through faith in Revelation, that we believe this world, which did not always exist, was made by the will of God. That it was God, who said, Let there be light, and there was light. That it was God, who said, Let there be an earthly world, and there was an earthly world.

He then passes on, from the more dormant, inoperative faith, to the active, influential faith of man. And first he instances this noble grace among the earliest living men, the *patriarchs of mankind*.

First, he brings *Abel*. And what was the faith of Abel? This youthful martyr believed the promise, that in due time the Seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. And, acting on that faith, he offered a humble, penitent, confiding heart to God, together with the firstlings of his flock; which humble heart, his proud, rebellious brother did not bring, with his offering of the fruits of the earth. Cain haughtily brought a mere thanksgiving offering. But his pious brother brought the innocent animals, to be slain upon the altar, as typical of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God for sin. Thus God, probably by sending fire from heaven to consume it, had respect unto the offering of Abel, but not unto that of Cain.

Next, he brings *Enoch*; called the seventh from Adam, because there were two of the same name before him. And what was the faith of Enoch? His biography is a short, but a glorious one. His strong faith caused him to live in such a continued course of piety, singular virtue, and sense of the divine presence, that it is testified by Moses, that he walked with God; a most expressive eulogy, in three words. And in reward for this faith, and because he pleased God, he was early taken from this earth of sin, up into heaven, without death. He was not; his friends could not find him; for God had taken him. Thus, in like manner, was good Elijah afterwards translated alive into heaven. Their bodies were probably changed in a twinkling, as the bodies of the righteous will be at the resurrection.

Next, he brings *Noah*; the last of the old world. And how did Noah show his faith? When he was warned by God, that he would destroy the earth by a Deluge; and was commanded to build an Ark to save himself and family, he did not *doubt*, nor *hesitate*; but although he had never seen, nor heard of, such a deluge, he was seized

with a confiding fear ; and notwithstanding the taunting and deriding people, he went on and built the ark. As God commanded, so did he. By this, he condemned the wicked world, to whom he was a preacher of righteousness for a hundred and twenty years, while the ark was building ; and thereby became a subject of that eternal deliverance, of which his temporal deliverance was the pledge and type. The world without faith, and without repentance, was drowned. But he, upheld by the finger of God, floated upon the face of the waters, and was safe. So will the good be safe in the midst of a dissolving world, while the wicked will be destroyed.

Next, comes *Abraham* ; the father of the faithful. Do you ask the evidences of his faith ? They are many-fold. First, when God said, Up, Get thee out of thy country ; leave thy home and thy kindred ; travel away from Chaldaea to Canaan, into a land which I will there tell thee of ; and which thou shalt afterwards receive as an inheritance ; he staggered not, for he accounted him faithful that had promised. He went out, not knowing whither he went ; not knowing whether he was going to a good, or a bad country. Again, by faith that Canaan was only typical to him, and to his seed, of a spiritual Canaan, Abraham sojourned as in a strange land, dwelling in frail and moveable tabernacles, and buying no ground except a burial place. For he looked for a city, even the New Jerusalem, which hath immortal foundations, and whose builder and governor is God. This should teach Christians to be willing to leave this world at God's call, although ignorant of the world to which they are going ; believing it to be the country whose inheritance is prepared by God for the faithful.

Through faith also, *Sarah*, although she at first laughed incredulously behind the tent door, when she thought the angel was a man who promised, received strength to bear unto Abraham a son, when she was past age, being ninety years old, because she judged him true who had predicted. And therefore there sprang to Abraham from one, and she as good as dead, a progeny like the stars of heaven in multitude, and as the sand by the seashore in-

numerable. Sarah through belief became, as had been foretold, the mother of nations.

But another, and most severe trial, was reserved for faithful Abraham. He was called to offer up as a sacrifice to God, his son, his only son, Isaac, the child of promise ; and even to slay him with his own hand. This startling command must have been not only excruciating to his feelings, but have appeared even contradictory to the word of God himself. For, in Isaac, it had been said, that his seed should be as the stars of the sky, and that they should inherit Canaan. But does Abraham refuse, or relent ? No. His faith in God sustains him in the trying hour. He bound Isaac, he laid him upon the altar on Mount Moriah, he stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son, his only son by Sarah. And why ? He knew that God could raise him up even from the dead ; could re-animate and re-call him dead, even from the ashes upon the altar ; from which, indeed, he did, as it were, receive him ; in order that he might be a type of the sacrifice and resurrection of the future Messiah. If Abraham was willing to give up his only son, how much more ready should we be, to give up our beloved relations and friends, when God calls them away by death.

Next, as an example of faith, is brought forward *Isaac* ; the spared son of Abraham. By faith in the divine revelations, the patriarch Isaac foretold to Jacob and Esau, his two sons, the blessings which were in reserve for them, and for their posterity. And when he had, through the maternal artifice of the son, given Jacob the principal blessing, instead of Esau the firstborn, and prophesied that the elder should serve the younger ; although he trembled very exceedingly, yet believing that the mistake, for some wise but inscrutable reason, was ordained of God ; and that Jacob, the younger twin, should become the root of his visible church ; he had faith to confirm his benediction upon Jacob, notwithstanding Esau besought him with tears : *I have blessed him*, said the aged Isaac, *yea, and he shall be blessed.*

Next, comes *Jacob* ; the father of the twelve tribes. By a like exercise of faith, Jacob, when he was dying, that is, was near his death, gave his prophetic blessing to his two grandsons, the sons of Joseph ; and foretold that two tribes should spring from these two sons ; and that the tribe of Ephraim, although the younger born, should be more powerful than the tribe of Manasseh. And then, in token of his faith in the verity of God concerning the promised Canaan, the good old man, being sick and feeble, worshipped God, leaning upon the top of his staff.

All these Patriarchs died, without receiving the promised country ; confessing themselves but strangers and pilgrims on the earth ; and thus declaring that they looked for a better country, even an heavenly ; and consequently, that they expected to be *raised from the dead*, to enjoy that better country. Such, and so prevailing, was their faith.

Next, comes *Joseph* ; the favourite and lost son of Jacob ; who, in his youth, was sold by fraternal envy, and carried captive into Egypt. And what was his faith ? It was so strong, that when he was ending his life, he mentioned it, as *a thing certain*—because God had promised to give Canaan to his great grandfather Abraham, and to his posterity—that the children of Israel, or Jacob, should depart out of Egypt, where they had long been held in bondage. And therefore, he gave commandment that, when they went, they should carry with them *his bones*, and bury them in Canaan. And God's promise did not fail ; the people were to go, and his bones were to be carried up.

Next, is brought forward the champion *Moses* ; the Jewish Deliverer and Lawgiver. By the *faith of his parents*, Moses, when he was born, was hid three months, before he was entrusted to the immediate providence of God, in an ark of bulrushes, among the flags by the river's brink ; because they saw that he was a proper child and very beautiful ; and presaged that he might be the one appointed to deliver them. And therefore, they were not afraid of the command of Pharaoh, who, to prevent

the rise of the expected deliverer, had ordered every male child to be cast into the river, and only the daughters to be saved alive.

And Moses himself, by faith in the promises of God, made known to him probably by his Jewish brethren, when he was grown resolved to join himself unto his own people, refusing any longer to be called the son of the princess-daughter, who had found him in the river flags, and humanely adopted and educated him. He choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of the true God, than, as the son of the king's daughter, to enjoy the temporary pleasures of the idolatrous court of Egypt. And esteeming the scoffs thrown upon the Israelites for expecting the Messiah to arise from them, greater riches than the courtly treasures ; for he looked away from them, far and forward, to a future reward.

By faith, Moses, having first proved the miraculous power of his God, above the Egyptian gods, by many signs, and especially by staying the hand of the destroying angel, who passed by the blood-besprinkled door-posts, and spared the Israelitish, while he slew the Egyptian firstborn ; and believing that God would deliver his oppressed brethren from their foreign task-masters ; he left Egypt. By faith, he led on, as the captain of his nation, not fearing the wrath of the enraged Pharaoh, and his hosts ; for he endured and persevered, not as one who looked to their visible gods, but as one who looked upward, and could see the invisible God.

And thus, by his unshaken faith in the interposition of God, Moses led his confiding people through the divided waters of the Red Sea, as on dry land ; while the rushing chariots of the impious, pursuing Pharaoh, and his hosts, were overwhelmed by the closing walls of the sea. So shall all those triumph, who trust in God.

Next, comes *Joshua* ; the able successor to the great Moses, in conducting the Israelitish army to the promised land. Do you ask the example given of his faith ? Moses had viewed the promised land at a distance from Mount Nebo ; and there died, and was not found, for God buried him. But Joshua had led onward the chosen

people, over Jordan ; and was now ordered by God, to encompass Jericho, the city of palm-trees, for seven days, without any engines of war ; but simply the priests carrying the Ark of God, and blowing rams' horns, as a summons for a surrender. Did this servant of the Lord doubt, or ridicule the expedient ? No. He had faith. And on the seventh day, as he shouted, and the horns blew, the walls of Jericho fell flat, the chosen people entered, and the city was sacked.

Next, comes up the pattern of *Rahab*, a Woman, to illustrate the grace of faith. Although Rahab had been a harlot, and consequently a great sinner, in her former life, at Jericho ; yet she repented, and testified her faith in the true God, when she heard of his miracles. And what did Rahab ? She hid the two spies sent by Joshua *in the stalks of flax, in her house roof*, and let them down *by a cord through the window*, and thereby risked her life. And afterwards, as a reward for this service, by placing *a line of scarlet thread in her window* for a sign, as was agreed on, she was saved, with her father and mother, and relatives, and their possessions, at the sacking and burning of the city ; when all the unbelieving inhabitants were destroyed. Thus was Rahab justified by her works of faith. And thus is the reward of faith confined to neither sex.

Last, come forward the *Judges, Prophets, and Kings*, who have been illustrious, some for their active, and others for their passive virtues ; and thus given evidence of their saving faith. And because it had been tedious to introduce them singly, and by specification, Saint Paul collects them together, men and women, *into one group*. Then, in a strain of noble eloquence, for Saint Paul was very eloquent oftentimes, he celebrates their fortitude, their victories, and their rewards, all obtained through the influence of their faith.

And what shall I more say ? he asks. Why bring more examples of the power and efficacy of faith ? For the time would fail me, to tell of Gideon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae ; of David also, and Samuel,



and of the prophets; who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again; and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection. And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; of whom the world was not worthy; they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.

All this noble line of the Elders; of patriarchs, of kings, of prophets, of judges, and of saints; although they had obtained a *good report*, the just approbation of man, and of God; Saint Paul concludes by saying, had not yet received the promised reward of their faith. And why? Because God, having provided some better thing, even the Gospel, for us; resolved that the ancient Saints, however happy they may now be, should not be made perfect without us. But that all, both they and we, should receive the fulness of the spiritual promise, and enter the heavenly Canaan, in hand together, after the resurrection of the body, and the general Judgment.

#### REMARKS.

This admirable, and consolatory Address of Saint Paul was particularly designed for the Hebrews. But it is equally valuable, and was doubtless intended, for the edification of the whole fallen world.

1. We learn, by what is declared of Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, that justification by faith is not a new doctrine, but is as old as the beginning of the world.

2. We learn, that the ancient patriarchs believed the promise of the earthly, only as a type and pledge of the heavenly Canaan; and that they therefore believed in the

resurrection of the dead, and an immortal happiness; although their views were, in comparison with ours, dim and shadowy; because life and immortality were not then so clearly brought to light, as they now are, by the Gospel.

3. We are taught, that faith is not only historical or speculative; not a rise of the *intellect* merely, but of the *affections*. That christian faith is an active principle, which leads to the utmost perseverance in doing, and fortitude in suffering, every thing which God has commanded. And that, *Faith without works is dead*.

4. We learn, that justification by faith was not intended for any particular time, or nation, but for all ages, and all countries; even for those, who, being unblest with a Revelation, apply reason and conscience to discover and obey the will of God. For, *The just shall live by faith*.

5. And now, if we would hold that faith, *which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen*, let us follow the footsteps of the Ancient Worthies; of righteous Abel; and Enoch, who walked with God; and Noah, the father of the second world; and Abraham, the father of the faithful, who withheld not his only son; and Joseph, who would not do that great wickedness, and sin against God; and Moses, who persevered as seeing Him, who is invisible; and all the rest, who lived and died in faith; and whose faith, and ours, will then soon, when the last trump shall sound, be turned into one general, united, and harmonious fruition. *For, without faith, it is impossible to please God*.

# THE STORY OF RUTH.

## SERMON XXXIII.

*Ruth* i, 16. — THY PEOPLE SHALL BE MY PEOPLE, AND  
THY GOD MY GOD.

To show the watchful eye, and controlling hand, of Providence, over even the minutest concerns of domestic life; and the unfailing reward of humble affection and piety; I will relate to you that very beautiful Pastoral, the simple and endearing Story of Ruth.

### THE STORY.

In the days of the Judges, a very long time ago, in order to escape from a famine that was in their own land, a certain man named Elimelech, with Naomi his wife, and his two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, removed from a city in Canaan into the country of Moab, where he probably thought he could live at a less expense; but where, perhaps for distrusting the Providence of God, he soon died. Indeed, it was evident he had done wrong, for he appears to have been a person of property, and therefore not likely to suffer for any of the supports of life; and he forsook the people and ordinances of the true God, to dwell in an idolatrous country. Naomi was now left a widow. But her two sons, Mahlon and Chilion, soon after the death of their father, as it seems, married two young maidens in Moab, one named Orpah, and the other Ruth. Here was another evil of Elimelech's leaving Canaan for Moab; that his two sons married and settled among idolaters. But the pious Naomi, who was so soon

widowed of her husband in a strange land, was yet to suffer another affliction; for in less than ten years, both of her sons, Mahlon and Chilion, who were perhaps of a weakly constitution, as their names indicate, died also, and died childless. Now Naomi, who perhaps had gone to Moab out of duty to her husband, and afterwards continued out of affection to her children, being bereaved both of her husband, and of her two sons; and having heard that the Lord had again visited the land of her nativity with plenty, communed with her two daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth, about leaving Moab, and returning to the city in Canaan, and they started on their way. As they were leaving Moab, the birthplace of her daughters-in-law, and the residence of their relations, Naomi, who tenderly loved her sons' wives, as they also greatly loved her, but who had now no worldly inducements to encourage them to go with her, said unto Orpah and Ruth: Go, return each to her mother's house; the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead, and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of her husband. Then she kissed them; and they lifted up their voice, and wept. And they said unto her, Surely we will return with thee unto thy people. Now it was the custom in these lands, and in early times, that the surviving brother should marry the widow of the deceased, if she were left childless. And Naomi, who had no more sons, replied to Orpah and Ruth, Turn again, my daughters; why will ye go with me? are there yet any more sons with me, that they may be your husbands? Turn again, my daughters, go your way; for it grieveth me much for your sakes, that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again. And Orpah, being unprepared to renounce all her worldly prospects for the sake of religion, kissed her mother-in-law, and returned back to her country, her relations, and her gods. But Ruth clave unto her mother-in-law. And Naomi, who was doubtless glad that Ruth remained with her, but who wished further to try her sincerity, said unto her: Behold, thy sister-in-law is gone back unto her people, and unto her gods: return thou after thy sister-in-law. But the

affectionate and pious Ruth, who had conceived so favourable an opinion of the character and religion of the God of Naomi, as to be willing to give up her connexions and prospects in her own country, and to embrace hardship and penury in a new land, tendered to her mother-in-law this most beautiful and melting reply. 'Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.' And when Naomi saw that Ruth was steadfastly minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her. So they two went until they came to the city in Canaan. And when they were come to the city, behold, all the city was moved about them; and they said, Is this Naomi? Naomi appears to have been greatly altered in her person and circumstances, since she left Canaan, where she and Elimelech had probably lived in abundance, and been much respected; but now she and Ruth seem to have travelled on foot, for many, perhaps near a hundred weary miles, and around one end of the Salt Sea, without any attendants, which quite surprised her former neighbours. And they said, Is this Naomi? And she, humbly accepting her afflictions as coming from the Lord, and perhaps considering herself as guilty in not having left Moab immediately on the death of her husband, said unto her neighbours, Call me not Naomi, which signifies *pleasant*, but call me Mara, which means *bitter*; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty; why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the Lord hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me? So the humble widow Naomi, with the devoted Ruth, her daughter-in-law, returned out of the idolatrous country of Moab; and they came to the city in Canaan in the beginning of the barley-harvest.

Now in the city of Canaan Naomi had a relation of her husband's, who was a mighty man of wealth, and whose name was Boaz. And when Naomi and Ruth had become settled in some homely lodging, the latter, looking forward

to nothing in Canaan but a life of labour and dependance, in order to support her mother-in-law and herself, proposed to go out a gleaning, as was customary, in those simple times, for the poor. Let me, said the kind-hearted Ruth to Naomi, who was probably unable to endure the heat and fatigue of such employment herself, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn — that is, of barley corn, for what we call corn in our country was not there known — and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find grace. And Naomi said unto her, Go, my daughter. Thus, although the Lord intended other things for the devoted Ruth, he was pleased first to try her humility, and patience, and industry, which shone so superior in her above her sister Orpah. And Ruth went, and came, and gleaned in the field after the reapers. And she happened, by chance as it seemed to her, but doubtless by the Lord's secret direction, to light on a part of the field belonging unto Boaz, the relation of her deceased father-in-law Elimelech. And, behold, Boaz came out from the city, and said unto the reapers, The Lord be with you. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee. Although Boaz was a mighty man of wealth, yet he went in person to superintend his own reapers. And it is delightful, to hear the condescending and pious salutation of the rich Boaz to his reapers, and their respectful and pious reply. The Lord be with you, said he. And they answered him, The Lord bless thee. Would that such might be the language always heard in our fields, while the bounty of Providence is gathering in ! Then Boaz asked his servant that was set over the reapers, Whose damsel is this ? And the servant that was set over the reapers answered, It is the damsel that came back with Naomi out of the country of Moab. And she said, I pray you, let me glean and gather after the reapers among the sheaves : so she came, and hath continued even from the morning until now, that she tarried a little in the house. There is a beautiful simplicity in this narrative, and in the introduction of Boaz to the gleaning damsel. Hearst thou not, my daughter ? spake Boaz kindly unto her, Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens ; for females in those days, and

in that country, were joined with the men in gathering in the harvest. Let thine eyes, continued Boaz, be on the field that they do reap, and go thou after them : have I not charged the young men that they shall not touch thee ? And when thou art athirst, go unto the vessels, and drink of that which the young men have drawn ; that is, of the pure water from the spring, which, it seems, was all that Boaz thought necessary until the work of the day was done. Then Ruth fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto Boaz, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger ? But Boaz had heard of Ruth, the pious damsel from a heathen land, how kind she had been to her mother-in-law since she was left a widow, and how she had left her own father and mother, and the land of her nativity, and was come unto a people which she knew not heretofore. And he said to her, The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord, under whose wings thou art come to trust. And Ruth replied, being thus encouraged by the gracious notice of Boaz, Let me find favour in thy sight, my lord, though I be not like unto one of thine hand-maidens. And Boaz, who had now formed a very favourable opinion of the modesty and piety of Ruth, said to her, At meal-time, come thou hither and eat ; and as she sat beside the reapers, and dipped her bread in the cooling vinegar, he himself reached her parched corn, the simple fare of those times, until she was sufficed. And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, to let her glean even among the sheaves, and to reproach her not ; and even to let fall some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and to leave them, that she might glean them, and to rebuke her not. So Ruth gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah, that is, nearly a bushel of barley. And she took it up, and went into the city. And her mother-in-law, the good Naomi, when she saw what she had gleaned, said, Blessed be he, that did take knowledge of thee. And when she learnt, that the man from whom she had gleaned was Boaz, the one of their next kinsmen ; and that he had told Ruth to keep fast by his young men,

until they had ended all his harvest ; she exclaimed, Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead. It appears, that Boaz had formerly been kind to Naomi's husband Elimelech, and she was rejoiced to find that he was still disposed to befriend them in their present distressed condition. And Naomi said unto Ruth, It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field, which might appear as a slight of his kindness. So Ruth, little thinking indeed what a change of fortune was intended for her constancy, kept fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest ; and dwelt with her mother-in-law.

It seems that, in this country, the law concerning a man's marrying his brother's widow, when he died childless, was by custom extended to the other near relations, when there were no brethren. And as Mahlon had left Ruth childless, and had no brother living, it happened that the law, and the usage of the times, gave the stranger Ruth a claim upon her kinsman Boaz, if there were no one nearer of kin, to become her husband. Therefore Naomi, like every tender and thoughtful mother, who wishes for the desirable settlement of her children, began to reflect upon this circumstance, and felt herself bound to endeavour, by such means as she deemed the most likely to succeed, to effect an union between the rich and worthy Boaz and the forlorn and gentle Ruth. My daughter, said she, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee ? And then Naomi told Ruth, that Boaz was about to winnow barley on that night in his threshing-floor. And having bidden her to wash and anoint herself, and to put on her best raiment, she counselled her to go down privately to the threshing-floor ; and when Boaz, after the work of the day was done, had feasted with his threshers, and his heart was cheerful, and he had gone to lie down at the end of the heap of corn to rest ; that then she should modestly, and in the established manner of the country, assert her claim upon her kinsman Boaz. And Ruth said unto Naomi, All that thou sayest unto me, I will do. And she went down unto the threshing-floor, and there commenced her religious courtship, as it might well



be called, as her mother-in-law bade her. And the upright and excellent Boaz, being already prepossessed in her favour, and being moreover pleased that she had preferred him to the young men whether rich or poor, and that she regarded the law of God ; instead of taking advantage of her exposed situation, or reproaching her with impropriety of conduct, or disdaining her as a poor destitute stranger, or suggesting that she was swayed by interested motives, he gave her his blessing, and his assent. Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter, said he. And now, my daughter, fear not ; I will do to thee all that thou requirest : for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. Howbeit, continued he, there is a kinsman nearer than I. This, it is probable, was an unknown, or unlooked for impediment to Naomi. But Boaz, having promised to make inquiry in the morning, and if that nearer kinsman, who had a prior claim to marry Ruth, would waive his right, that he himself would become her husband ; in token of his favourable regard for her and Naomi, he heaped her veil, or shawl, with six measures of barley, for he said, Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law. And when Ruth went back into the city, and Naomi inquired, what success she had ? and she told her all that had happened ; then said the good Naomi, Sit still, my daughter, until thou know how the matter will fall ; for the man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day.

And Naomi thought right. For, on that morning, Boaz went up to the city gate, where the people were wont to pass and repass, and when the kinsman of whom he spake came by, he said, Ho, such a one, calling him by name, turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down. Then he called ten of the elders of the city, and said, Sit ye down here. And they sat down. Then Boaz related, in presence of the ten elders, whom he had called as witnesses of the transaction, as was customary in former times in this country, all the circumstances attending the return of Naomi and of Ruth out of Moab ; and of the lawful and asserted claim of the latter upon the kinsman, to redeem a certain parcel of land, which fell to her from Naomi's deceased husband Elime-

lech ; and to marry Ruth, and thereby to raise up the name of the dead, that is, of her former husband Mahlon, upon the inheritance. And when the first kinsman declined the redemption of the land, except it were disconnected with the marriage of Ruth, lest he might mar his own inheritance, as perhaps he had already a wife and family ; then Boaz, who evidently was himself desirous of marrying Ruth, declared, in presence of the witnesses, that he would redeem the estate, which Naomi, without considering Orpah, as she had remained in her own heathen country, had transferred to Ruth ; and would also marry Ruth, that the name of the dead might be raised up upon his inheritance, and not be cut off from among his brethren. Then said Boaz to the elders, To this purchase and proposal, ye are witnesses this day. And all the people, who had collected themselves around the city gate, and the ten elders, said, We are witnesses. Then did the witnesses, who appear to have been pious men, upon the public recognition of this honourable and interesting marriage, conducted according to the usages of the country, pronounce their glad benediction upon Boaz : The Lord make the woman, that is come into thine house, like Rachel and like Leah of old ; and worthily bless the seed, which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman. So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife ; and the Lord gave her his favour, and she bare a son. And then did the women, the neighbours of the pious Naomi, gather around to congratulate her upon her renewed prosperity ; and blessed the Lord, who had thus blessed her in giving her a grandson ; for, said they, he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age ; for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath borne him. And Naomi, being thus solaced for the death of her husband and her two sons, took the child, her little grandson, which the women her neighbours named Obed, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it. Thus, by following the plain way of duty and piety, was the forlorn and affectionate Ruth led on, by the hand of a smiling Providence, to a happy settlement in Canaan ; her little son Obed became the grandfather of king David ; and

she herself, the simple barley-gleaner in the fields of Boaz, became the greatly honoured, and remote mother of our blessed *Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*.

#### REMARKS.

Although I have endeavoured to interweave the Moral of this beautiful Story into it, as I proceeded, yet it may well suggest some other useful remarks.

1. We are taught by the affection of Naomi and Ruth, that there ever should be an affection between parents-in-law and children-in-law ; and also, we infer, although some appear to act otherwise, a harmony between step-parents and step-children, if Providence allot them to live together.

2. We see in this pastoral picture, that God regards the distressed condition of the pious poor, and will finally reward their confiding resignation to his appointments.

3. We learn, that no judgment can be formed of a person's piety from outward appearances ; for Naomi was eminently pious, yet God, to try her faith in a heathen country, greatly afflicted her for many years.

4. We learn, that persons who quit the ordinances and communion of the people of God, in order to escape some slight inconvenience, or to enlarge their worldly possessions, are not likely to be prospered.

5. We may infer, that those who, like Orpah, fall back in the day of trial, will soon be obscured and forgotten ; while those who, like Ruth, persevere unto the end, will be had in everlasting remembrance.

6. When we observe the sad changes in the external condition of others, we are reminded to prepare for changes ourselves, and especially for our great and last change.

7. We are taught, that honest industry, patience in poverty, and a willingness to labour in support of an aged parent, or benefactor, are both respectable and acceptable to God.

8. We learn, that religion will produce an affable condescension, and a becoming gratitude, between the high-

er and lower orders of society, which will tend to the interest and happiness of both.

9. We suggest, that wisdom and religion should be always *gleaning* ; ever picking up some useful hint from every person and event, for future profit.

10. It appears, that our heaviest trials often arise from those quarters, whence we expected the most satisfaction ; and our greatest solace from those, whence we expected none.

11. This story teaches, that parents should tenderly advise their children in the important article of marriage ; that they may make a wise choice, and thereby increase their future usefulness and comfort.

12. It also teaches, that prayers should be offered up by pious people on the birth of children ; that they may be a consolation to their parents, and a blessing to society, and to themselves ; for without the blessing of God, none of these things can be.

13. We remark, that as the chief scene of this Pastoral was laid in Bethlehem-judah, where afterwards Christ was born ; so the marriage of Ruth, a heathen damsel, to Boaz, the rich Jew, prefigured the future calling of the Gentiles into the church of Christ.

14. Finally, Let the condescending kindness of the wealthy Boaz to the destitute Ruth, lead us to contemplate the kindness of Jesus to us destitute and unworthy sinners, without himself upbraiding, or suffering others to upbraid us.

# VALUE OF THE SOUL.

## SERMON XXXIV.

*St Matth.* xvi, 26. — FOR WHAT IS A MAN PROFITED, IF HE SHALL GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD, AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL? OR WHAT SHALL A MAN GIVE IN EXCHANGE FOR HIS SOUL?

[Some illustrations due to an English Layman, and an American Divine.]

THE THEME suggested by the inquiry of our Lord in the text, may lead to a short discussion of three very important propositions. *First.* The natural arguments for the soul's immortality, independent of Revelation. *Second.* The infinite value of the soul. *Third.* That if the soul be lost, all the acquisitions of this world will avail nothing.

### I. THE NATURAL ARGUMENTS FOR THE SOUL'S IMMORTALITY, INDEPENDENT OF REVELATION.

What that principle of intelligence is, that vital spark of heavenly flame, which men call the soul; how it is allied to the body; and in what condition it subsists, when its corporal functions cease, are among those inscrutable mysteries, which confound and awe the inquisitive, but limited human mind. But, notwithstanding the abstruse, and unsatisfactory nature of such discussions, the truth itself of the great doctrine of the immortality of the soul has ever been the popular belief, in all ages, and among all nations. There are many strong arguments, *independent of Revelation*, that the soul is to be eternal; that it has nothing, as in material things, tending to dissolution; not being, perhaps, independently immortal, but such by omnipotent destination.

1. The soul is argued to be immortal, from the nature of the soul itself, and especially its immateriality; which, though not absolutely indispensable to the everlastingness of its duration, has been proved to a moral certainty.

2. It is argued, from its sentiments and passions; as, particularly, its tenacity of existence, and its horror of annihilation; with that silent approbation, which it receives from the practice of virtue, and that dissatisfaction which ensues in it upon a participation in vice. Who can conclude, that the existence of a being is to be circumscribed by mortality, whose ideas are not? Shall every other affection be rightly planted by nature, and shall that longing after immortality, natural to all mankind, be alone misplaced, or intended to be disappointed? This uneasiness in the present, this disposing of ourselves over to farther periods of duration, this returning appetite after something still to come, is a kind of inborn, instinctive symptom, which the mind has of its own imperishable nature.

3. The soul's eternity is evinced, from the perpetual advancement of it towards perfection, without ever being able to arrive at it; its being capable, even after the body has attained its full vigour, of still surpassing acquisitions, both in knowledge, and in habits of virtue. Can it enter into the imaginations of man, that the soul, with a capacity of such exceeding perfections, and of adopting new unlimited improvements, shall shrink away into non-existence almost as soon as created? That after having but just begun to take an admiring survey of the stupendous, and benevolent system of nature, and of the power, and wisdom, and goodness, of its Creator; the soul must perish, in the very commencement of its researches? The soul hath capacities for a much greater quantity of knowledge, than it can here be master of; and an insatiable curiosity to develop the hid things of nature, and of providence.

4. Reason has judged the soul to be immortal, from man's situation here being apparently so incomplete in itself. Man, when viewed as on a probation for a better existence hereafter, is the most wonderful instance of divine beneficence; but, if we deprive him of all connexion with futurity, he is the most surprising and unac-

countable composition in the entire creation. This great point involves the justice, and benevolent nature, of the Supreme Being. Was man made for so mean a purpose, as only to vegetate, and to transmit his species? Can God delight in the production of such immature intelligences?

These reasonings, together with the analogy of all nature dying, and reviving, in every part; the inequality of human allotments in this world; and the apparent discomfiture of virtue, and triumph of vice, oftentimes; with many other arguments of an abstruser, and more metaphysical form; offer, even to the infidel philosopher, a well grounded hope of the soul's immortality. But though Nature can thus partially evince this sublime, and comfortable truth; yet Revelation alone has rendered it more certain than the hope of any temporal blessing, and impressed it with a full conviction upon our minds, as Reason is now fortified by Faith. No, Christian! Though all the physicians, and all the prayers, in the world, cannot make a soul immortal on earth; yet neither can all the physicians, nor all the prayers, hinder a soul from being immortal in another world. Yes, Christian! Wished-for assurance is now rendered doubly sure. *The stars shall fade away, the sun himself grow dim with age, and nature sink in years; but after the final war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds; thy soul shall flourish in immortal youth.*

## II. THE INFINITE VALUE OF THE SOUL.

1. The soul is of great *absolute* value; not only from its indestructible nature, but from its *fabric*, and its *powers*.

The astronomical, animal, vegetable, and mineral wonders, are all perfect in their kinds; but what are they but only admirable modifications of senseless matter? while the superior fabric of the soul is of a spiritual, intellectual essence; a more immediate emanation from the Uncreated Spirit.

Its powers also are of the most dignified order. The Creator hath endowed the soul with understanding; a faculty of contemplating things seen and unseen; and of investigating and concluding concerning their attributes.

The soul is able to trace results, dependancies, and alliances, present and ultimate, to their causes; and can thence ascend to the great First Cause, and Last End, of all things. It has the power of calling back what is past, and of anticipating what is to come. It can discern the profitable, and the prejudicial; the secure, and the perilous, in natural affairs; and, what is of higher import, in affairs moral, and spiritual. It possesses a judgment of duty, and a capability of rendering it, both in inclination and in action. It can recognize the impressions of moral eminence; and is able to join with it, and to pay submission to it, with an approbation of heart far transcending any other kind of gratification. Do not such capacities of the human soul bespeak its intrinsic worth; especially when we reflect on those exceeding improvements, of which it is susceptible? The value of the soul may be estimated further, by the exalted purposes for which it was designed, and which it is fitted to serve. As all things were formed for the glory of God, so were human souls made to behold, and to admire the supreme Creator in all his works, and to render unto Him the praise. But to have an adequate conception of the soul's importance, and of what enlargements it is capable, we must view the spirits of those made perfect in heaven; and there see them engaged in the sublimest offices, and their faculties and affections expanding and rising and glowing, more and more, forever and ever.

Although it is a lamentable truth, and one over which we all have but too deep reason to deplore, that the faculties of the soul may be depressed, and its taste so debased, that it cannot be affected, nor act, as its immortal destination, and its rational nature demand; and that it may acquire a disrelish for those objects in which its proper felicity is placed; yet the soul may be restored. Therefore, justice requires us to estimate the soul by its capability of such a restoration.

2. The soul is of great *relative* value. As each person's soul is of worth to himself; we may calculate its value, in a relative estimate, from the variety, number, importance, and elevation of the pleasures, which the right exercise of its moral and intellectual faculties may produce.



How do the enjoyments suitable for the soul transcend and obscure all sensual gratifications. The virtuous, and cultivated soul can enjoy, among other pleasures, the complacency of Knowledge, wherein our curiosity, and investigating faculties, can indulge in the feast of reason ; the complacency of conscious Uprightness, of exercising that temper and equity towards others, which we would desire to have exercised towards ourselves ; the complacency of Industry, wherein every ability is exerted to its most beneficent end ; the complacency of Meditation, whereby the heart and the mind unite in emotions of awe, and of gratitude ; and the complacency of estimating Moral Pre-eminence with suitable veneration, which highly dignifies and refines the mind. Besides these, the soul can enjoy the delights of Adoration and Love, directed towards a worthy object ; the delights of Obedience, rendered from a principle of perfect attachment and obligation ; the consolation of Hope, whereby the renewed soul believes that it is pardoned of its sins, and has an interest in the Redeemer's unfailing regard ; also the joy of Communion, wherein the heart can hold sweet converse with its Maker ; and the anticipated fellowship of Spirits, the meeting with dear departed friends, and being introduced to the church of the first-born, in unspeakable cordiality and confidence ; in a world, where there shall be no more pain, nor sorrow, nor parting.

But to estimate the sum total of blessings in being furnished with a rational soul, we must add together the countless sources of gratification, and the unlimited variety of objects, which are offered to its diverse faculties and affections ; and to these elevated enjoyments, of which the soul is capable, we must superadd the stupendous idea of infinite, and eternal.

Finally, if any now doubt concerning the value of the human soul, there remains one more consideration, which, although obvious, and already anticipated by the Christian, ought to overwhelm his best feelings with awe, and humility, and gratitude. It was to redeem this soul from the dominion and doom of sin, that the sacred Son of God, and sympathizing friend of man, condescended to leave a heaven of holiness for an earth of pollution ; to live a life

of suffering, and to die a death of ignominy. Who can now help exclaiming, in the amazement of admiring concern, O the unutterable worth of an immortal soul !

When we take such a view of a virtuous human soul, even while on earth, *What a piece of work is man; how noble in reason; how infinite in faculties; in form and moving, how express and admirable!* But when we contemplate the immortal soul in heaven, *In action, how like an angel; in apprehension, how like a god!*

### III. IF THE SOUL BE LOST, WHAT WILL AVAIL ALL THE ACQUISITIONS OF THIS WORLD ?

When we look around on this assembly, of different ages, and of various characters, how is the mind solemnized at the reflection, that each individual has a never-dying soul, which is to be saved, or lost. For the words of our Lord, in our text, imply, that the soul, although immortal, and inestimable, may be lost. Let then our meditations be sobered, while we recount some of the ways, whereby we may lose our own souls.

The soul may be lost, not only by open violation and rejection of the pure Saviour, and his doctrine; not only by indulging in dissolute habits, and keeping irreligious company; but by remaining satisfied with a mere historical knowledge of religion, without its being allowed to affect the heart. By a corrupt faith, resulting from partial views, and only leading to the form of godliness without the power. Or by an accommodating faith, which excludes self-denial, and has a reservation for easily besetting sins. Also the soul may be hazarded, by sluggishness in things spiritual, more than in things temporal; and keeping this world and its vanities uppermost in our hearts. By presuming upon a long life, and therefore procrastinating repentance. By neglecting self-scrutiny, and relying upon the flattering opinions of others. And by blunting pungent convictions, before they produce proper transformation of hearts, and purity of actions.

Man has a nature destined to two separate lives. The one limited, and fleeting; the other unlimited, and permanent. Now the important inquiry arises, in which of these two lives would a reasonable soul wish to be

happy ? However ready every person may be to answer this question ; however wise they are in theory, yet how many in practice contradict their own judgments. How many are laying up stores for this life, as though there were no danger of losing it ; and neglecting to insure an interest in the other, as if they doubted whether it were worth possessing. How many are selling their holy birth-right, for a small mess of that same red pottage. How many, who have once gone forward, are looking back after the Egyptian flesh-pots. How many are coveting secretly the wedge of gold, and the beautiful Babylonish garment. How many are even wishing for their poor neighbour's one little pet lamb. But what are pleasure, power, honour, fame, or wealth, or all combined, when put in competition with the sublime anticipation of an existence without end, and a felicity proportionate to that existence ? What more obvious disgrace to man's boasted reason, than that those, who fully believe in these two different modes of being, should yet be unceasingly coveting, and scheming, and toiling, after the perishable treasures of this world ; especially when they experience, that oftentimes their best endeavours defeat their hopes ? These riches, which all so much applaud, the owner feels the weight of. Every wise man values this life, only as it is a preparation for another ; and is ready cheerfully to sacrifice the gratifications of a few wasting years, for the promise of an eternity. Suppose a man, by a mode of unprincipled worldly wisdom, to pamper his craving heart to the full, and thereby to forfeit his soul ; or suppose him, by a life not legally vicious, to gain vast possessions, and thereby to neglect his soul ; what profit hath he ? Doth not the Day approach, when he shall find his foolish plans defeated, and be made to confess the truth of what he now despises ? The Day, when self-deceiving mortals shall be persuaded of the futility of their schemes ; and when those few wiser persons who, scorning the enticements of lust, and the paltry vanities of the world, took the word of truth for their guide, and aspired to an abode in the heavens ; when they shall enjoy their utmost desires, without any risk or possibility of disappointment ? What though one might possess the whole world, all its wealth, its domina-

tions, and its festivities, for sixty or even eighty years ? It were but walking on rolling logs in the water ; one by one, they would slip from under him. After all, no man is happier in truth, than he is in God's esteem. He is the only rich man, who understands the use of wealth ; and of sinful pleasures, repentance only remains. Then how ought all trifling amusements, and all interests of time, in propriety to be forgotten, or but secondary, to the more momentous claims of eternity. *Eternity, thou pleasing, dreadful thought !*

Let then the culture of the soul be recognized as our prime solicitude. A contemplation so elevated and beneficial, as that of the soul's immortality and value, cannot too often engross our minds. What exercise can be more improving to the human heart, than to be often reflecting on the soul's superior endowments, and immense privileges ? Or what method more powerful to excite in us an emulation lifted above groveling, trivial avocations, than to regard ourselves as inheritors of eternity ? The man, who realizes the worth of the soul, will not need a stronger argument for the dignity of virtue ; nor a more forcible incitement to live worthy of it. For as noble and generous thoughts spring from dignified and virtuous actions ; so likewise are virtuous and dignified actions the offspring of noble and generous thoughts. How then should we reverence our souls. How should we be circumspect, not to degrade and injure this celestial inmate, by any mean pursuit, or sensual grossness. How should we endeavour to eject all evil qualities of the heart, and to infuse heavenly habits in their room. What power can any momentary afflictions have, to cast down that person, who considers that he is destined to ages after ages, not merely of contentment and delight, but of rapture and ecstasy hereafter ? Such an one can exclaim under trials and bereavements, All is good that God sends us ; peace with heaven is the best friendship ; and where God is, there is nothing wanting. Yes ! Experience has recorded, that he lives indeed, who lives not to himself alone ; that he can do nothing well, who is at enmity with his Maker ; but that he, who resolves to amend, hath God on his side. In whatever profession, or condition, Provi-

dence hath cast our lot, we should thank God, and be content with what we have ; remembering, that to serve God in our honest occupation is the best kind of praying ; and that he, who obeys Him, hath the best master in the world. Although we should love many things beside God, we should love nothing above God. For the sum of all is, to fear and love our Creator and our Saviour, and to do no evil thing ; in short, to live, as we mean to die.

With this assurance of immortality, the Christian can exult even in bodily agonies, while on the pinions of faith his soul soars upward with ecstasy, to the sublime object, which it has long been worshipping ; and cries, O blissful day, when I shall escape from this crowd of noises, and empty bustle, this world of impurities ; and be welcomed into the exalted company of that Saviour, who poured out his blood like water to wash me from my sins, and into the holy community of those beatified spirits, who are the ransomed of the Lord. The christian soul can bid a cheerful farewell to its clayey tenement, with a foretaste of being reunited to it, in a glorious and joyful resurrection. O then, when the disembodied and accepted soul appears before its Judge, the Accusing Spirit, to apply a sublime sentiment, beautifully expressed, the Accusing Spirit, which has flown up to heaven's chancery with its sins, shall blush as he gives them in ; and the Recording Angel, as he writes them down, shall drop his tears upon the words, and blot them out forever.

In review of this subject, I close with this solemn self-application. If the soul is of such infinite value, and liable to be lost ; how awfully responsible is it, to have the charge of souls. How should a minister watch over a people, as one that careth for their souls ; and how should a people pray for him to the Father of Spirits, that he may obtain mercy to be faithful, as one that must give an account.

# VOICE FROM THE DEAD.

## SERMON XXXV.

### A FUNERAL SERMON.

*Matth. xxiv, 44. — BE YE ALSO READY.*

THE Pale Horse, with his Grim Rider, hath approached this house.

1. We are assembled to bear the remains of a human being to the house appointed for all the living ; to take a last farewell, and to bury the dead out of our sight. We are taught by this mournful event, the instability of all earthly things. Change is the only certain thing in this world. Man, that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble. We spend our years, as a tale that is told. Brief, very brief, is the space between the cradle and the coffin. Short, very short, the time from the swaddling clothes and the nurse's arms, to the shroud, the sepulchre, and the worm. Here lies a senseless body, that was lately animated with a living spirit ; that was all activity, and health, and joyousness. Now the eye is quenched, the cheek is cold, the lips are sealed, and the heart is still ; the soul has gone to judgment. O why is dust and ashes proud !

2. In small villages, death is so rare, that we seldom think of it ; in large cities, it is so common, that we little regard it. But what more solemn a spectacle can there be, than the funeral of a fellow mortal, a fellow immortal ? Dust to dust, earth to earth, ashes to ashes ; so passes away the body. Not so the soul. Another spirit is added to gloom or to glory ; to heaven or to hell. And

yet with how little concern is beheld the minister and the mourners, the scarf and the crape, the hearse and the grave. But the inhabitants of other worlds are not unconcerned. Angels rejoice over one repenting sinner added to their number. The Judge of Angels has paid his blood to redeem that soul. And Satan gnashes his teeth at losing it. But since the mind naturally shrinks from these thoughts, and endeavours to forget them, it is necessary often to recall them. May it be better for us, to have come to the house of mourning, than to have gone to the house of feasting; for the glory of man passeth away, but the word of the Lord shall not pass away. Thine incorruptible spirit, thou Father of Spirits, is in all things.

3. Ever since the Fall of man, a heavy black pall has been let down by the four corners, and hung over the earth. But the eye of Faith can pierce through the thick dark curtain, and see beyond it a world of happiness for the good, and a world of misery for the evil.

4. Let every one, whose eye rests on this bier, examine what would have been his doom, into which of these worlds he would have entered, if he had been called, at this time, instead of the deceased; and ask for what end he is spared? Were you better than he? This is not the time, nor the place, for praise. It would not gratify the dead; it might injure the living. Let what was good in the departed be cherished and imitated; and what was evil — for the best are sinners — be lamented and forgotten. Death is no respecter of persons. He takes the wise, the brave, the ambitious, the wealthy, the busy, the beautiful; the friend, and the one who is dearer than a friend. They fall side by side, at his touch, like the grass before the mower. Their bodies are buried in peace; their souls are committed to God's infinite mercy. For God made not death, neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living. But the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.

5. To the bereaved relatives, whose broken hearts are perhaps almost tempted to repine at this affliction, God saith, What I do, thou knowest not now, but thou

shalt know hereafter. May they piously wait the great explanation. The Lord knows when it is best to call his children home. We know not what would have been his lot, if the deceased had been left longer in this world of trial and temptation. We believe that every one is removed from life, at the very best time for his own future welfare. To the good, to the believer, the grave may be viewed as a refuge, an asylum for the soul, weary with the cares, and anxieties, and sufferings, and sins of this world. They wish to be with God, which is far better. There can they rest from their labours, and their works will follow them. May the bereaved relatives of him, whose lifeless dust is now before us, be enabled to look in their day of visitation unto Him, who can turn their weeds of woe into the white robes of the saints ; who can wipe away the tears from their eyes, and bind up their broken hearts. Their friend can never return to them ; they must go to him. May they have faith and strength to say, It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good ; it is well for me, that I have been afflicted ; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord ; and be prepared, when death shall call them, to meet their departed friend in the realms of glory.

6. In this life, we see but through a glass darkly. I said, Death was no respecter of persons. I may say also, that he is no respecter of ages. He very often takes even little infants. This may appear mysterious ; it is indeed one of the dark providences of God ; at the same time, it is one of the brightest intimations of another world ! Otherwise, they would appear to be born for no purpose ; at least, as it respected themselves. But they are taken, like a bud from the desert, to be transplanted, and to bloom in the celestial Eden. Their little souls, like a bird from a cage, fly away and are at rest. They are taken from the evil to come ; for a short taste of pain in this world, to enjoy an eternity of happiness. A few days ago, and the little babe was smiling in its mother's arms ; and now it is smiling on the bosom of an angel. For it was for such as these, that Christ died, although they have never heard of Christ in this world. Suffer little children



to come unto me, said the divine Saviour ; and they are now gone unto him. Their angels do now behold the face of their heavenly Father. Sometimes infants are taken away, for a trial of the faith of parents. The idol is removed, that they may set their affections on things above. And if we are as innocent as a little child, it is no matter how soon we may die. But if we continue in sin, it had been better for us, if we had died even before we were born.

7. It is well, that man knoweth not his time. If the wicked knew the bounds of their life, they would presume ; if the timorous knew, they would be unfitted to attend to the duties of time. It is therefore left secret with Him, who holdeth the keys of life and death. It is likewise left for us to be *always* ready. And why should we be so attached to a world of sin and suffering ? A world, where pain lies hid behind the screen of pleasure, and disappointment behind success ; where evils can be increased, and good be taken away ; where endeavours end without performance, and performances without satisfaction ; and where knowledge, misimproved, will add to condemnation ? Why should we cleave to a world, in which hopes are deceitful, pleasures cloying, and possessions fugitive ? A world, where one is troubled with the restlessness of the young, another with the peevishness of the old ; where one forgets God in the hurry of business, and another in the whirl of dissipation. A world, in fine, in which 'small offences may raise enemies, and great benefits not always gain friends ; where we find ourselves courted by interest, and forsaken by ingratitude ; where we see those we love daily falling into the grave, and ourselves considered as aliens and strangers by the rising generation ?' But, however we may value human friendships, and human acquisitions, they are overrated, because they want durability. They soon leave us. And, what is as unsatisfactory, if they do not leave us, we leave them. While we are enjoying these heartless scenes, time is flying, the sands are running. Our life is passing away as the trace of a cloud. Let each one sit down, and count up all the departed friends he can remember. How few of us are there, who have not lost some relation, or valued friend,

even in the past year. It is nearly incredible, that we can see the almost daily descent into the grave of those we love or fear ; that we can see property changing owners, and houses changing tenants ; and yet not wish and seek for a more abiding city. But we are bound down to the world by many cords. And if the trials and afflictions of life, the pains of body and anxieties of mind, and bereavement of friends, *cut these cords*, one after another, as they are designed to do, and loosen us from the world, we shall have reason to thank God for them, as among his blessings. Even if it be like cutting the heart-strings, it is to cut us loose from the enemy of our souls.

8. However gloomy, or dangerous, or barren, the prospect in our pilgrimage of life, we should not shun to go forward with our eyes open, and to know our state. To him, who putteth off repentance, the time is shorter, the work greater, and the strength less. He has more sins to repent of, stronger habits to be resisted, and less power to withstand them. Habits are formed by repeated acts, and therefore old habits are the strongest. They entwine themselves into all our thoughts and passions, and are quitted with much difficulty. Therefore, we should be very careful and zealous to form and preserve good desires, and religious habits. We should remember, that the sting of death is sin. We should remember also, that 'death has shut its sting into our Saviour's side; there left it; there lost it.' Let us then accept that Saviour, and be ready to follow him into that world, where there is neither death, nor sin. We should be, not only habitually, but actually ready for the coming of our Lord. The summons will soon come, 'Arise, and depart hence, for this is not your rest, for it is polluted.' Are you able to hear it? Death often comes suddenly. How many are arrested by a fever; how many fall in a fit; how many go to bed, and wake not; how many go on a journey, and faint by the way; or go to sea, and return no more. And if death do not come suddenly, if you are left to grow old, and then to linger, and pine, and consume away upon your bed, in your own house, amid physicians and friends, it will come surely. A voice from the grave is daily calling, Return, ye chil-

dren of men. Watch therefore, for ye know not at what hour your Lord doth come, whether at midnight, or at cock-crowing. The deceased has gone to meet *his* God; ye living, prepare to meet *your* God. The grave will soon be ready for you; are you ready for the grave?

9. O! my living friends, ye who are yet the spared monuments of the Lord's sparing mercy, when death comes, how cheap, how little worth, will appear the objects of this world; the farm and the merchandize, the gold and the silver, and the goods laid up for many years. Nothing will then stand by you but religion. No matter to the deceased now, what was his fame, who were his relations, what houses and servants he possessed, nor what was the cause or manner of his death. Ah no! if only he has his name written upon the white stone; if he has entered that house not made with hands, if angels claim him as a brother, if he wears a robe of righteousness, if he enjoys that rest which remaineth for the people of God, all else is lighter than vanity. If our deceased friend has slept in Jesus, if the death of his body has proved the birth of his soul, he now knows more of happiness than the happiest man on earth; and his knowledge will be growing, and his bliss increasing, while the heavens endure, even for ever and for evermore. We rejoice, that there remaineth to the living, and to the dead, the same God. But we tremble when we reflect, that only the pure in heart can see God. Where then shall the profane, the scoffer, the unclean, the sabbath breaker, the dishonest, the self-righteous, the worldly minded, appear? O where, in the day of searching? Theirs is the hope of the hypocrite. It shall perish. If we are not fit for heaven, we are not fit for death.

10. When the body is committed to the ground, we should not view it as lost. It is not dead, but sleepeth. It shall awake in the morning of the resurrection. The time will come, at the last trump, when the sinews and the flesh shall come upon the dry bones in the valley of the church-yard, even although they be very many, and very dry, and the skin shall cover them, and the breath shall come into them, and they shall live. Then shall our brother arise. A power stronger than death, and

higher than nature, shall raise him up. I am the Resurrection and the Life, saith the Redeemer; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. As the dying body before exclaimed, O death, where is thy sting? it will then cry, O grave, where is thy victory? But to enter the realms of glory, before the body has a mortal resurrection, the soul must have a spiritual resurrection. The soul, which has been long dead in trespasses and sins, must be quickened by the Spirit of God, and rise to newness of life. And unless we rise to newness of life in this world, it were happy for us if we might never rise at all, in the world to come. For there is also a resurrection unto damnation.

11. O how many, on a dying bed, have repented of beginning religion too late; none ever repented of beginning it too early. Let us then be up and doing, while the day of probation lingereth. Let us not write our good resolutions upon the sand, which the returning tide of worldly cares, and carnal pleasures, will wash out into forgetfulness. What will avail resolutions without performances, and self-reproach without reformation. He that washeth himself, after the touching of a dead body, if he touch it again, what availeth his washing? So is it with a man that fasteth for his sins, and goeth again, and doeth the same: who will hear his prayer? and what doth his humbling profit him? We must not only see the evil of sin, and sincerely hate it; not only see the beauty of holiness, and ardently desire it; but we must possess that lively faith, which will produce good works. We must bring forth the fruits of the Spirit, love, peace, humility, charity, and forbearance. We must love the day, the worship, and the ordinances of God. We must delight to seek out, and to do, the will of God. We must study and follow the precepts of the Gospel. We must, after all is done, feel ourselves to be but unprofitable servants, and cast ourselves upon God's mercy, through his crucified Son. This must we, each of us, do speedily and earnestly and unceasingly, if we would hereafter enter that high and holy and happy place, where there is no more sin, nor pain, nor parting, nor graveyards.

12. My friends, the celebration of a funeral is not a barren, unavailing solemnity. It is designed for the consolation of sorrow, and for the strengthening of piety. The beholding of a dead body, whether of friend or foe; the bare beholding of a dispirited corpse, is the *loudest sermon* that could be preached by man or angel. If you are not moved by one gone *to* the dead, you would not be moved though one rose *from* the dead. Let those then, who came here weeping and mourning, begin to weep and mourn also for themselves, if not prepared to follow. And let those, if any can be, who came unconcerned, and merely to view the funeral obsequies, reflect that before long, others, we hope not equally indifferent, will be assembled to view the sad spectacle of their obsequies. Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets. Therefore, be ye also ready, for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. Blessed are the dead, who die in the Lord; for though the righteous be punished in the sight of men, yet is their hope full of immortality; and having been a little chastised, they shall be greatly rewarded; for God has proved them, and found them worthy for himself. The Lord looketh on the *heart*, and judges righteous judgment. He hears the prayer, which perhaps the voice never uttered; he records the purpose, which perhaps perished for want of opportunity of action. O thou, who livest while mortals die! to know thee is perfect righteousness; yea, to know thy power is the root of immortality. Under all our bereavements, wilt thou be our friend, our father, our guide, our life, our health, our rest, our chief joy. Give us a new nature, and new affections. Above all, so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto religious wisdom.

13. Does any one flatter himself that he can love God, and yet live in sin? How presumptuous! 'The love of God and the love of the world are like the two scales of a balance; as the one rises, the other falls.' Do not comfort yourselves, that you may live in sin here, and live in holiness hereafter. Doth not a parent punish his child, and a master his servant, for disobedience? and shall not a just God punish his children, his servants, for sin?

Be not deceived. God is not mocked. If ye live to Him, ye shall see life; if ye live to the flesh, ye shall see death. There are but two roads to choose; the broad one, and the narrow one. The one is thronged with the giddy multitude; the other is blessed with here and there a traveller. O close your ears against the beckoning flatteries of the one; and let your eye-lids look straight before you in the other. Resolve, this day, in presence of the living and the dead, to break off your sins by repentance, and to live lives of new obedience. Shun sin, as you would shun the bite of an adder; for, however sweet in the beginning, in the end it will sting like a serpent. Religion has no sting, neither in the beginning, nor end. All her ways are pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. Watch and pray therefore, lest ye enter into temptation. In all your trials and doubts, look unto Jesus. He is the penitent sinner's friend. His grace is sufficient for you. His strength shall be perfected in your weakness. He hath opened a fountain, which shall wash you from all uncleanness.

14. And now, as ye are about to let down the dead into the dark and lonely tomb, there to lie and moulder into his original dust, until his atoms shall be remodelled and reanimated at the Judgment Day; ye have little time to weep for him, but begin to weep for yourselves, if you are not prepared to follow him. If the cold clay-clods dropping upon the coffin do not wake you, scarcely would the trump of the archangel arouse you. If the witnessing of this scene does not make you better, it will leave you worse. If you yet continue in sin, you are digging graves of eternal death for yourselves. Then return, reform, and live. It is religion alone, which can lighten the soul in passing through the dark valley of the shadow of death; which can bear up your feet, as they wade over the bitter waters of Jordan; and can guide you up the banks into the living Canaan. Then, be no more careful and troubled about many things, but seek earnestly the One Thing needful. Fly from the wrath to come, as did righteous Lot to the welcome Zoar. Flee to Jesus, as did the man-slayer to the City of Refuge. Look to Him, as did the bitten Israelite to the typical Serpent. Call, as

did sinking Peter, Lord, save, or I perish. Do not go home, and straightway forget what manner of persons you are. The day of life is short; the day of grace may be shorter. In the church-yard, we see the head and foot stones of almost every length. We see the forgotten grave sunken in over the mouldered body; and we see the just opened grave yawning for its prey. We see the fresh turf laid over the full measure of a man; and we see the little sods, scarcely a few spans long. O then, be ever mindful of the time, when you shall lie down in the dust. As you draw further and further from the earth, strive to draw nearer and nearer to Heaven. The pale horse with his grim rider hath already overtaken our deceased friend. He will soon overtake you. Therefore, **BE YE ALSO READY.** And thou, the priest, who warnest; and thou, the sexton, who buriest; **BE YE ALSO READY.**

# THE PRODIGAL SON.

## SERMON XXXVI.

*St Luke xv, 24.* — FOR THIS MY SON WAS DEAD, AND IS  
ALIVE AGAIN; HE WAS LOST, AND IS FOUND.

‘FOR the sublime, the beautiful, the pathetic, and the instructive, the *History of Joseph* in the Old Testament, and the *Parable of the Prodigal Son* in the New, have no parallel, either in sacred or profane history.’ This Parable represents God as a common Father to the whole family of Adam. It also represents the children of men as of different characters, although all related to this common Father. This Parable was designed for the Jews, the *elder brother*, who were unwilling that the Saviour should receive the poor and outcast Heathen, the *younger brother*; though both originally of one primitive father, and God the Father of all. But I shall not now consider it in a national, as it was at first intended, but in a private, domestic application. All our Lord’s parables are very original, and useful; but this picture, above all the others, is the most tender and touching, even to tears. I will endeavour to give such a paraphrase of the story, as will explain, but not injure its brief and beautiful simplicity. You have heard it a hundred times, but, no matter, it will bear hearing a hundred times more. I am sure, I wish to hear it again myself. I will first relate the *Narrative*; and then draw and apply the great and consolatory *Moral*.

A certain man had two sons. The one was a solid, grave youth, reserved and austere, sober himself, but not at all good humoured, and not easily drawn from his early



habits and home. The other was a volatile and mercurial young man, impatient of restraint, and willing to try his fortune in the world. Now it was a custom in the East, for sons to demand, and receive their portion, if they chose, during their father's life-time. And the younger son said to his father, Father, give me, he might have said, If it please thee, give me, the portion of goods that falleth to me. Not that he wished to apply to business, and trade with it, and so gain more; but weary of his father's wholesome restraints, he sighed, like too many other young men, for what he called liberty. And the father divided unto them his living. He gave the younger son his share, and offered the elder son his; although the elder chose to let his portion remain with his father, until he might naturally inherit the whole estate. For the father divided his substance between them.

And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living. So sinners, that go astray from God, venture, and often lose their all. The younger son, like the sinner, was content to have his portion of present enjoyment; taking no concern for the future. And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land, and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. Not to tend sheep; that would have been an honourable employment; for Jacob, and Moses, and David kept sheep. But to feed swine, the basest and vilest of all employments; and to a Jew peculiarly degrading. No character was meaner, in the sight of a Jew, than a swineherd. And he would fain, had his nature permitted, have stayed his hunger with the husks, that the swine did eat; or rather, it is probable, with the fruit of the *charub tree*, a kind of pulse used in Syria to feed swine; and no man gave food unto him. And when he came to himself, when his sound senses returned, and he began to reflect, he said, How many hired servants of my father have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger. How foolish to leave so good a home. But, continued he, I will arise, and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sin-

ned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. That pride, which will arise up out of the ashes of other sins, was now quelled. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off; before any other of the family were aware of him; as if from the top of some high hill he had stood looking out the way he had gone, and been moaning for his return; his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. The son came slowly, as one ashamed; but his father ran, to meet him. So is God willing to meet the returning sinner, even when he is yet a great way off. The father kissed his prodigal and polluted son, or, as the word implies, kissed him again and again, in token of his welcome, and to seal his pardon. And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son. He has not time to say, Make me as one of thy hired servants, before his compassionate father interrupts him. For the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet. He orders the best robe, that used on birthdays, or festivals. And the ring, which in ancient times was given as a mark of honour. Perhaps the signet-ring, containing the arms of the family, in token that he was again become a branch of his kindred; and signifying, that although he had spent one portion, the father intended to give him another. And the shoes, for he came home barefoot, and perhaps his feet tender with travel. Formerly, those, who were taken captive, had their shoes taken off; and when they were restored to liberty, their shoes were returned. There is no rebuke from this kind father; no taunt, Why did you not stay with your riotous companions, and your swine? There is nothing like this. The son came in rags, and his father clothed him. Thus, if we repent, we shall not be left to bear the reproach of our youth; our sins shall not be mentioned against us. Nor is this all. For the glad father cries also, And bring hither the fatted calf; not some coarse food, but the calf fatted for some special occasion; not only for a feast for him, but for a festival for the

whole family. Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. He was indeed dead in trespasses and sins. And he was lost to himself, to his family, to his country, and to his God. And they began to be merry.

Now his elder son was in the field, attending to the farm. And as he came, and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked, what these things meant? And he said unto him, Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound. And he was angry, and would not go in. Therefore came his father out, and entreated him. The elder brother repined and envied, because, although he had been good from his youth, and had never gone astray, he had never been feasted by his father. Thus brothers are too apt to envy. The elder would not go in, except his poor brother went out. His father could take him in, but he would not go in to him. Thus God can forgive, when our brothers cannot. This mild and amiable father did not send a servant, but went out himself, and entreated his eldest son to come in, and be reconciled to his humbled brother. And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee; I have led a regular, moral life, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment. And yet thou never gavest me even a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. But as soon as this thy son, he does not say, *my* brother, but *thy* son, taunting his entreating father; as soon as this thy son was come, who hath devoured thy living, not *his*, but *thy* living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf. Here he aggravates his poor brother's faults; for it is not said before, *how* he had squandered his property. Although, to be sure, in the company of harlots is 'the readiest way in the world, to exhaust the body, debase the mind, ruin the soul, and destroy the substance.' And as to the charge of partiality, no doubt, the elder brother might have had a kid, or a fatted calf, at any time he desired it; but he had always had a plenty of good things at home, while his poor brother was starving among stran-

gers, afar off. As the elder son thought of his father, so are we apt, when we think too highly of ourselves, to think too hardly of our Master. The elder son, comparatively, needed no repentance. But those, who have long served God, and been kept from gross sins, although they have much to be thankful for, have nothing whereof to boast. The elder son had already received his part, and by staying with his father, and thus waiting for something in reserve, might inherit all. But the father, we may suppose, had a right to do as he pleased with what he had acquired *since* the first division. But how hard is it for those, like the elder brother, who are in appearance more innocent, to compassionate those, who more openly transgress. And how apt are we, like this brother, to be too sharp upon those who have offended; and to boast of our own superior virtue and obedience. We are often unwilling to receive those repenting brothers, whom God has received. But how did the father reply to his envious, unfeeling son? And the father said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine. As if he had said, Son, the reception of thy brother is no rejection of thee. Thou shalt still have thy double portion, as the elder brother; for indeed, all that I have is thine. Mine and thine are one. All is common between us. And canst thou not spare thy poor, famished brother a little part? The father might have set up his own will as the cause; but he mildly gives him a reason for this unwonted rejoicing, *It was meet*. It was natural, to be more presently thankful for the resurrection of a dead child, than for the continued health of a living child. This son of mine, he says, is thy brother, to whom thou shouldest show compassion; especially as he is no longer the person he was. He was dead in sin, he is now quickened by the power of God. He was lost to thee, to me, to himself, and to our God; but now he is found; and he will be a comfort to me, and a help to thee, and a glory to God. *It was meet*, said the rejoicing, forgiving father to the repining son, that we should make merry, and be glad; for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found. Like this expostulating father, so is our heavenly Father willing to overlook our

infirmities. God is gentle and winning towards those, who are ever so perverse and provoking. He stoops to reason with them, and he draws them with his loving-kindness. And the father's welcome of his prodigal son, shows how pleasing to God is the conversion of sinners, of great sinners ; and how ready he is to meet, and encourage, and receive them upon repentance. As the elder son made no reply, we may suppose he was convinced and ashamed ; and that he went in, and was reconciled to his poor, humbled, penitent brother.

#### MORAL.

This incomparable Parable has been thought very naturally to show the gradual steps of a sinner's *Fall* ; and the gradual steps of his *Restoration*.

##### I. HIS FALL.

1. The sinner is in a *state of departure and distance from God*. The world is a far country. He breaks from the wholesome restraints of his heavenly Father. He loses sight of God ; and there is a great distance between the love of God, and the love of self. When the love of God is gone, carnal love takes its place, and riots in the heart.

2. He is in a *wasting state*. He wastes his substance, his time, and his opportunities. He lives riotously, and misemploys and buries his talents. He squanders away all spiritual riches.

3. He is in a *wanting state*. He wants food, he wants raiment, to nourish his soul, and to cover his spiritual nakedness. He has no provision for a future state. How empty is that soul, that God does not fill. What a famine in that heart not fed by the bread of life.

4. He is in a *servile state*. Sinners are perfect slaves. He that commits sin is the servant of sin. He is a slave to the Devil, who is a citizen of every country, town, and city. The farther he remains from God, the nearer he is to ruin.

5. He is in a *state of perpetual dissatisfaction*. The pleasures of sin will certainly disappoint one. They are suited neither to the nature, nor the desires of the soul. He that tastes them feeds on the wind. There is no yoke so galling as the yoke of sin ; no servitude so mean, as that to one's own passions.

6. He is in a *state without hope of sympathy*. When the prodigal begged, *no man gave unto him*. He had brought his misery upon himself, and no man pitied him. In vain will the sinner cry to the world for relief, for the husks of the world will never relieve him.

7. He is in a *state of death*. He is dead in trespasses and sins. There is no spiritual life in him. No living to God ; no union with the Saviour ; no communion with the saints.

8. He is in a *lost state*. This my son was lost. He is lost to virtue, lost to honour, lost to religion, lost to all good. He is lost to himself, his friends, his country, and his God.

9. He is in a *state of madness and frenzy*. The prodigal had been, as it were, beside himself. Madness is said to be in the heart of sinners. An evil spirit has gotten possession of their souls.

## II. HIS RESTORATION.

1. The sinner first begins *to come to himself*. He begins to feel his misery, the guilt of his conscience, and the corruption of his heart. He cries, *I perish with hunger*.

2. He resolves *to forsake sin*. And he not only intends to shun all the occasions of sin, but he firmly purposes to retrace every step of sin, and to return in his soul to God. He says, *I will arise*, and go back.

3. He is enabled, by faith, *to look towards God* as a compassionate, tender-hearted father. *I will arise, and go to my father*. God delights to be called *Father* by his penitent children.

4. He *confesses his sins*. He feels himself unworthy of God's favours. *I am no more worthy to be called thy son*. He confesses his faults and his folly. He does not justify himself, but pleads guilty. He humbles and

abases himself. He even aggravates his sins ; against *heaven*, and before thee.

5. He determines *to submit* to the government of God, and by his blessing to obey all his commands. He is willing to be directed by the word of God, and by that to regulate all his desires. Make me *thy hired servant*. He is ready to be a door-keeper ; he is ready to serve.

6. He puts his holy resolutions *into practice* without delay. He shows his faith by his works. *And he arose, and came*. He does not hesitate, but immediately follows his good impulses. He not only purposes, but performs.

7. God tenderly *receives him* with the kiss of peace and reconciliation. There is no rebuke, no discouragement. His sins are blotted out, and he is restored, and reinstated into the heavenly family. His father *fell on his neck, and kissed him*. And even ran to meet him, *when a great way off*. If we draw nigh to God, he will draw nigh to us.

8. He is *clothed with the garments of holiness*. His rags of nakedness are changed to a robe of righteousness, white and clean. He enters into a covenant with his Father, and walks in newness of life. The whole heavenly family are called upon to rejoice over him. And the church above, and the church below, join in the general joy, that the *sinner lost* is become a *sinner found*. As the father of the prodigal was the one most rejoiced ; so is no one so much pleased as God, when sinners return unto him. And so ought all his children to rejoice, at what he rejoices.

Let us all now take warning, by this affecting Narrative of the Prodigal, not to wander from our heavenly Father's home ; and if we have hitherto wandered, immediately to arise, and return, if peradventure he may receive us.

## THE NEW BIRTH.

### SERMON XXXVII.

*St John* iii, 7. — MARVEL NOT, THAT I SAID UNTO THEE, YE  
MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

THIS very remarkable declaration is recorded only by Saint John, who probably wrote to supply what the other Evangelists had omitted. The occasion of it was this. Nicodemus, a member of the Grand Sanhedrim, that is, a learned Jewish senator or privy counsellor, came to Jesus by night, either for fear of the Jews, or that he might have more privacy and leisure in his conversation, and addressed Jesus by the respectful name of Rabbi, and as a Teacher sent from God. Without any particular answer to the salutation of Nicodemus, Jesus replied, Verily, verily, using a strong asseveration, indicating that something of great importance was about to be spoken, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. And when Nicodemus strangely understood Jesus as referring to a second natural birth, Jesus continued, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not, he repeats, Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye — here the number changes — ye, that is, not only thou, but every one, must be born again; or, as the words may be translated, *born from above*. The wind, said Jesus, bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit.



I. 1. The Bible must be explained upon the principles of common sense. It is full of oriental, metaphorical phraseology. The Saviour taught in parables and similitudes. And the text under discussion is evidently one of the most figurative. This new birth could not have meant a birth from Paganism to Christianity, for it was directed to a Jew. It did not refer to any birth from either Gentile, Jewish, or Christian parents in particular. It was a birth, not of blood, not because of an extraction from the chosen people, or of a distinguished ancestry; nor of the will of the flesh, that is, by any thing that the carnal heart of man could purpose in its own behalf; nor of the will of man, that is, by any thing that another could be disposed to do in our behalf; but of God, by the unlimited power and boundless mercy of God. It was emphatically a spiritual birth. Nicodemus had trusted in the external observances of the Law; but our Lord immediately directed him to the source of internal purity. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. The emblems of the Spirit are water and fire; signifying the one his purifying and fertilizing, the other his pervading and refining nature.

2. The operation of the new birth is beautifully compared to the operation of the wind. As the same word means both *spirit* and *wind*, in the original languages, the similitude has a peculiar propriety. We feel the wind, but we see it not. How it gathers, and how it spends its strength, is a mystery. The wind blows in a variety of directions, and in all countries, day and night. We see it bow the forest trees, break the stubborn oak, bend the pliant reed; and we feel it refresh our own souls. But we do not, nor can we ever, see the wind itself; we only know its existence by its almost omnipotent effects. So is every one that is born of the Spirit. We know its operations by the change in the life. Some need the strong influences, like the rushing mighty wind; and some the gentle influences, like the sweet breathing of the south. As the wind goes where God sends it, so the Spirit goes where God sends it. As we hear the sound thereof, so shall we hear the sound of the Spirit working in the Christian — for behold, he prayeth. But because this doctrine

is a paradox, it is no chimera in itself. Men will not believe, because they cannot comprehend. But 'there is not a man in the universe that can fully comprehend *one* operation, either of God, or of his instrument *nature*; and yet they must believe, and do believe, though they never did, nor ever can, fully comprehend, or account for, the objects of their faith.' Even to this day, this day of discoveries and explanations in natural science, men cannot account for all the changes in the wind, nor can they render it submissive to their will. And if men cannot govern or explain the wind, how can they expect to control or expound the visitations of the Spirit? The Spirit may, and probably does operate, in ordinary cases, through the *medium of the conscience*.

3. The propriety and beauty of the metaphor of the new birth has been often illustrated by Divines. When a child is born, though no new matter is brought into existence, yet a new creature is brought into existence; and all its capacities are new, and suited to that world, on which it hath entered. Thus, when the Spirit of God has changed the heart, the person indeed is the same; but he becomes a new man, possessed of new capacities, perceptions, affections, and dispositions, and is prepared to make a new use of all his organs, senses, and faculties.

When an infant is born, it has all the parts of a grown man; but they are in a weak state, and need nourishment, attention and time, before they are fitted to perform their proper functions in a complete manner. Thus the regenerated sinner has the substance of all holy dispositions communicated to his soul; but they are in an infantile state, and must grow up gradually, and with care and spiritual nourishment, to maturity.

No man can comprehend how the infant is formed in its embryo; nor can any man know, how God effects the sanctifying change in the sinner's heart. He works by means and instruments in both cases.

The birth of the infant precedes the exercise of its senses; so the new birth must precede all the actions of the spiritual life.

And as when a living child is born, it will certainly

move and act; so when the sinner is born again, or from above, he will repent, believe, love, obey, and worship.

‘Every man,’ says Dr Adam Clarke, ‘must have two births, one from heaven, the other from earth; one of his body, the other of his soul; without the first, he cannot see nor enjoy this world; without the last, he cannot see nor enjoy the kingdom of God. As there is an absolute necessity, that a child should be born into the world, that he may see its light, contemplate its glories, and enjoy its good; so there is an absolute necessity, that the soul should be brought out of its state of darkness and sin, through the light and power of the grace of Christ, that it may be able to discern the glories and excellencies of the kingdom of Christ here, and be prepared for the enjoyment of the kingdom of glory hereafter.’

II. 1. But, what is it to be born again? It is not changing one kind of sin for another; nor one sect or creed for another. Neither is it outward reformation merely. It is not neglecting one duty to do another duty. It is not always running even to religious meetings, if thereby we disregard any paramount social demands at home. Upon the Sabbath unexceptionably, and at all other suitable times, a small matter should never be allowed to keep our feet from the courts of the Lord. We should not neglect the assembling of ourselves together. But the Holy Sabbath must not be unsanctified by rendering every day alike. Extremes produce a dangerous revulsion. There is a religious, as truly as any other kind of dissipation. It is of little use, to be always going to learn, and leaving no time to practise our duties. It is much easier to pray, at least to pray with the lips, or to hear another pray for us, than to labour. And a well inclined heart can, and will be devotional, while engaged in any lawful and expedient vocation. But, to be born again, the soul must be new-modelled and new-moulded. To be born again, is to begin anew, as those that have hitherto lived either much amiss, or to little purpose. ‘We must not think to patch up the old building, but begin from the foundation.’ We must have a new nature, new principles, new affections, new aims. Our old evil pro-

pensities must be slain, and new holy ones must be born, and grow, and strengthen with our strength. And 'this new birth has its rise *from* heaven, and its tendency *to* heaven.' But Saint Paul, Saint Peter, and Saint John, and the Scriptures at large, are the best comment upon the concise injunction of our Saviour. The new birth implies, repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God. We must be partakers of the divine nature. We must love. For love is of God, and every one that loveth, is born of God, and knoweth God. We must be made alive. And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. The spirit itself must bear witness with our spirit that we are born of God. For he that believeth hath the witness in himself. We must lead new lives. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new. For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? We must experience a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness. Ye know that every one which doeth righteousness is born of him. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; and he cannot sin, that is, wilfully and continually, because he is born of God. He that is begotten of God keepeth himself. He abhors that which is evil, and cleaves to that which is good. His daily cry is, Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. He gives all diligence, to add to his faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity. Thus is this doctrine asserted, and abundantly fortified by Scripture. This quickening of the soul into a new life is, most usually, a *slow and gradual work*. First appears the germe, then the bud, then the blossom, then the small and immature fruits, and last the ripe, and rich, and cheering clusters.

2. But to be a little more specific, What is it to be born again? Is it to increase in human wisdom? No. The understanding may be filled with light, even to overpowering illumination; and, at the same time, the heart be crowded with that darkness, which may be felt. It must be a new birth of the heart, rather than of the head. In fine, it is a birth, not only from Pagan pantheism and polytheism into Christian Theism; but from bigotry and fanaticism into the middle path of a catholic, liberal, enlightened zeal. It is a birth, of the anathematizing polemic into the peaceable minister. Of the lip-worshipper into the heart-worshipper. Of the sacrilegious into the sanctified. Of the Sabbath-breaker into the Sabbath-keeper. Of the time-serving into the self-sacrificing statesman. Of selfishness into patriotism. Of the sophisticating pettifogger into the fair-minded counsellor. Of the deceiving charlatan into the medicating friend. Of the weigher with light weights into the holder of the just balance. It is a birth, of the neglecter into the protector of parents. Of the swearing shipmaster into the praying pilot. Of the winebibber into the waterbibber. Of the epicure, the spendthrift, the libertine, and the debauchee, into men of sense and soberness. Of the irresolute, vacillating, inefficient loungeur, into the firm, fixed, and active doer of good. Of the eye-servant into the single-hearted. Of the busy-body in other men's matters, into one who is busy only in his own. It is a birth, of the liar into the truth-teller; of the thief into the honest man; of the jockeying into the true; of the covetous into the generous; of the cruel into the humane; of the censorious into the charitable; of the haughty into the courteous; and of the lukewarm into the ardent. In short, it is a birth, of the defying boaster into the stricken penitent; of the lion into the lamb; of the sinner into the saint. Such, and so great, and so holy, is the change, we conceive, which is wrought upon the heart, and which issues forth into the whole length and breadth of a vigilant life, upon the new birth of the soul. But, in this world, we can never be entirely freed from sin. The body must be laid in the grave, and there be dissolved, before it can be changed into the similitude of the angels.

III. Do you say, my Brethren, that the Decrees of God distress you ? That the doctrines of predestination, election absolute, eternal reprobation, fixed purpose, physical ability and moral inability, peccable and impeccable possibility, and especial influences, perplex you ? My friends, God is no respecter of persons. Election is grounded upon what, in human language, is called foreknowledge. Whom he did *foreknow*, *them* he did predestinate. But with God, time is one eternal *Now*. He doth not measure time, as we do, by a succession of ideas in the mind. With him, all is intuitive. All is present ; no past, no future. He looks over the human life, as we look over a map, or a book ; and sees the end from the beginning. He can foresee, and foreknow, what we each one of us shall be, even before we are born. Thus salvation is nothing arbitrary, but contingent ; being based upon character. And character is based upon educational bias, strength or weakness of mind, and strength or weakness of temptation. Away then, with all metaphysics and mysticism from Scripture. Away with all doctrines predicated upon a few select passages, which, thus insulated, nullify the pervading and free invitations of the Gospel. They lead to presumption, or to despair. They mock free agency. They destroy accountability.

Do you mention the patriarch Jacob, in the Old Testament ? Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated ; and this before the children were born, or had done either good or evil ? That doubtless was a temporal, national election, for a particular end ; the elder shall serve the younger. Or that the Almighty, in the perfection of his knowledge, foresaw something in the heart of Jacob, preferable to what was in the heart of Esau. But you say, Does not God make the human heart ? True ; but we know, because we *feel*, that we have the power of volition within ourselves, to obey, or disobey. Do you mention Saint Paul, in the New Testament ? That was no ordinary, but a very extraordinary conversion. Those were the days of miracles. Otherwise, if you quote the conversion of Saint Paul, it is an encouragement to sin, that the grace of God may the more abound, which God forbid. Perhaps the very fact of Saint Paul's possessing and ex-

erting so great zeal, although it was not according to correct knowledge, was the reason of his special conversion. As he verily thought he was doing God service, it pleased the merciful God to turn his fervour into the right current ; to transform him from a zealous Jewish persecutor, into a zealous christian minister. He was to be a chosen vessel, to bear God's name before the Gentiles. But did not Saint Paul condemn himself, after his conversion ? He did ; and why ? Because he then knew, that he had before self-blinded himself to the true light ; and what Christian but laments, and condemns himself for his former sins ?

It is true, my Brethren, that, in this world, and in temporal affairs, even now, for wise purposes, perhaps to try our faith, or our patience, or our humanity, one is blessed above another. But in things spiritual, and eternal, we believe that God does no more for one than for another, their characters being equal. He works in all, both to will, and to do ; yet leaves them to will, and to do, as they choose. The Spirit is always drawing all men with the cords of love. If God were to remove the obstinacy from A, B, and C, and not from D, E, and F, although none might merit mercy, would it not be unequal ? Would it not militate against one of his noblest attributes, that of moral impartiality ? Were it not even more just, even if less satisfactory — I speak with reverence, and in the fallibility of human judgment — *to condemn the whole* ? God forbid, that we should ever cherish such views of his sovereignty ; of his uncontrolled, and uncontrollable benevolence. Do you read, that God, out of his mere good pleasure, hath elected some, and reprobated others ? And that the potter hath power over the clay, to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour ? My friends, we believe the same. We believe in the efficient, discriminating influences of the Spirit of God. But we believe, that these efficient, discriminating influences are directed to those alone, who use the appointed means, so far as they are known, for working out their own salvation, with fear and trembling. And we believe, that these eclectic influences from on high are denied to those alone, who neglect to use the known, and appointed means ; and

whom therefore God hardens ; that is, by withdrawing his restraining power, he permits them to harden their own hearts, and thereby to become vessels fitted to destruction. Do you say, that God does make a difference ; he makes angels higher than men ? True, but this is not a moral difference ; and higher does not always mean happier. And if man is offered a happiness as high as his nature will admit, it is sufficient. If the vessel be *full*, it will not complain, because it is small.

My Friends, the means of salvation, as well as salvation itself, are ordained. We can all use these means. God doth not fetter our feet, and then command us to run. If we could not come, knock, and ask ; we should not be called upon to come, knock, and ask. We must plant, the ministers must water, and the Spirit of God will give the increase. We shall be judged according to our means of belief and obedience. Infants, we trust, who have committed no sin, will be redeemed by mercy, without judgment. The Heathen, who cannot believe before they hear, will probably be judged by the loud voice of conscience in their own breasts. Those who were under the Law, will be judged by the Law. Those under the Gospel will be judged by the Gospel. Errors of ignorance will be winked at. Errors of presumption will be punished. If our election were unconditional, Saint Peter would not have called upon the faithful, *to give diligence* to make their calling and election sure. And Saint Paul would never have feared, lest he, after all that was done, might himself become a castaway. The simple truth is, that, in a christian land, all who obey the Gospel are elected ; all who disobey the Gospel are non-elected. The good are elected to everlasting life ; the evil to everlasting death. Salvation is free. The Spirit is free. And we are free.

Finally. Although the Spirit of God is the grand agent, we must not be passive, in the new birth of the soul. Feeble, dependant man is called upon to co-operate with his Maker. We must *give diligence*. Draw nigh to me, and I will draw nigh to you. God helps those, that help themselves. We must not sit still, and



pray ; but, at the same time, must put our shoulder to the wheel. Nor should we demur. It is impossible to be happy, unless we be holy. The kind Spirit is now brooding over our hearts, like a Dove ; hovering and alluring us, as it were, from our thorny nest on the earth, to the healing branches of the Tree of Life in the Heavens. Let us yield to the upward influence. Then our bodies, which are born from beneath, shall die ; but our souls, which are *born from above*, shall live.

# THE GREAT QUESTION.

## SERMON XXXVIII.

*Acts xvi, 30.* — WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?

THIS has been the inquiry, ever since the world was made, *What must I do to be saved?* This is still the inquiry of dying man, scattered and grouped over this vast earth into various peoples, and kindreds, and tongues, from the burning tropics to the arctic ices; of all, who feel something swelling within their dissolving nature, which speaks of an hereafter; *What good thing shall I do, to inherit eternal life?*

It is a melancholy sight, to look over the world, and see the different means used by the creature to gain the almighty favour of the Creator; the imperfect, the deluded, the unworthy means used to propitiate the Deity, and to clothe this frail mortal with a hope of a blessed immortality.

Look at the *Mussulman*; the devotee of the great military apostle. Hear him cry, 'There is no god but God; and Mahomet is his Prophet.' Hear him declare, 'The sword is the key of heaven and hell.' See him purify his body by washings, and leave his soul uncleansed. Hear him pray his five times a-day, except when he has prayed enough on the day before, to lessen his number to-day. See him fast through all the month Ramazan; fast all the day, and feast all the night. Behold him make his weary pilgrimages to the distant shrine at Medina, one at least of which is necessary to salvation; see him also walk his seven times round the house of Abraham, and with reverence kiss the black stone, which descended

white out of heaven. And hear him boast of the bright-eyed Houris, which await the faithful in his sensual paradise. Thus does the Mussulman expect to be saved.

Look at the *Chinese*. His moral guide is the great Confucius, who lived about five hundred years before Christ ; and to whose memory each town in China has a place consecrated. But if this great philosopher could point out the way of life in this world, can he point out the way of life in another ? The Canonical book of the empire is called 'The King ;' which, however it may every where foster the belief of a Supreme Being, does no where inculcate a spiritual worship. Thus, by believing in the doctrines of 'The King,' and by obeying the wise maxims of Confucius, does the China man hope to be saved.

Look at the *Hindoo*. If not, like the ancient Persian, bending before the rising Sun ; behold him bowing before the image of his chief god, Brahma, and his two aids, Vishnu and Sheva ; and offering a polluted, degrading worship to the innumerable inferior deities, the works of their own hands, that cover and infest the land. Each man has his god. See the mourning widow ascending the funeral pile of her dead husband. See the immortal human soul destined to run the gauntlet through the bodies of the brute creation, before it can arrive at happiness. Thus, by a multiplied series of groveling, and sometimes excruciating ceremonies, grounded upon a faith in polytheism, and in the metempsychosis, does the Hindoo expect to be saved.

Look at the *Indian* ; the red man of our own forests. He worships the Great Spirit. But how limited must be his revelation of a future state, when he directs his hatchet and his bow to be buried with him at his death, thinking he shall want them in another world. Thus does even the poor and untaught, but proud Indian, pay homage to some Being above himself, in expectation of being saved.

Look at the *Jew* ; the believer in one half of the Bible. Here stands a Jew of one sect, who admits of no religion but the law of Moses ; there stands a Jew of another sect, who adds to the Law of Moses the traditions of the two Talmuds. See the Rabbi unroll the parchment of the He-

brew Pentateuch, and hear him expound from the Chaldaic Targum. He is still looking for the Messias to come, to rebuild the temple, and conduct his chosen people back to the promised land. The Jew believes in a Saviour yet to come, and thus he hopes to be saved.

Look even at the *Monk* ; the believer in more than the whole of the Bible. He kneels, and prays over his rosary ; he invokes the whole calendar of saints ; he fasts often ; and performs his long and severe voluntary penances. Thus, by mortification of the flesh, instead of humiliation of the spirit ; by adhering to the uncertain traditions of the church, instead of following the certain injunctions of the Bible ; does the austere Monk expect to be saved.

Thus do we behold a great portion of the world, the Mussulman, the Chinese, the Hindoo, the Indian, the Jew, and the Monk, all employed in doing some imaginary good thing, in order to inherit eternal life. Perhaps now some inquisitive mind, some mind yet unstable in the faith, may ask, And why is not the hope of these men as well grounded, as the hope of the Christian ? They have their holy books, their Korans, their Vedas, their Shastahs, their Talmuds, their Traditions ; and how know we, that these are not as sure guides, as our holy book, the Bible ? Why is not the religion of the Mosque or the Pagoda, of the Synagogue, the Temple, or the Monastery, as good as the religion of the Church ? This is a reasonable inquiry, and to such as are sincere in the question, and whom ignorance or negligence has left unfurnished with a reason of the hope that is in them ; and some such we fear there always will be in every mixed assembly ; to such, it demands a sober answer. To this, therefore, we reply, that if we support the divine revelation of christianity, of the Bible, all other religions, all other holy books, fall to the dust ; for the Bible declares, that there is no other name given under heaven, whereby we can be saved, than the name of Jesus Christ. And to support the credibility of the christian religion, our arguments are very many-fold. To these, however, we can here only advert to the heads of the most prominent, all

of which can be most amply, and incontrovertibly substantiated. These evidences form a *nine-fold cord* of unbroken strength.

1. Vast numbers of wise and good men, through many generations, and in distant countries, have agreed in receiving the Bible as a divine revelation.

2. The agreement of the sacred writers among themselves, is another cogent argument of their divine inspiration.

3. The miracles, by which the writers of the scriptures confirmed their divine mission to their contemporaries, afford us also a most convincing proof in this matter.

4. The prophecies contained in the sacred scriptures, and fulfilling to this day, fully demonstrate that they are divinely inspired.

5. Only the scriptures introduce the infinite God speaking in a manner worthy of himself, with simplicity, majesty, and authority.

6. The tendency of the scripture constitutes another unanswerable proof.

7. The actual effects, produced by the scripture, evince their divine original.

8. Brevity is so connected with fulness in the scriptures, that they are a treasure of divine knowledge, which has never been equalled, or exhausted.

9. Lastly, He that believeth, hath the witness in himself.

This *Novenary of Proof* should be studded in stars in the blue baldrick of heaven.

You may now say, perhaps, that these evidences of the divine inspiration of the Bible appear to *us* manifold, and conclusive; but have they thus appeared to men not only of strong and learned, but of unprejudiced minds? Have any men, except the clergy, whose business and livelihood it is to support this belief; any men eminent in science, in literature, in jurisprudence, in metaphysics, deemed the Bible a sacred book, as the only sure guide to salvation? Hear then the testimony of some such great,

and good men ; men of different professions, of different sects, of different ages ; men high in society, as in reputation ; men profound in the investigation of truth, and in the detection of error :

There never was found, said the great *Lord Chancellor Bacon*, in any age of the world, either philosopher, or sect, or law, or discipline, which did so highly exalt the public good, as the christian faith.

There are no songs, said *Milton*, comparable with the songs of Zion ; no oration equal to those of the prophets ; and no politics like those which the scriptures teach.

In his own Bible, thus wrote the learned *Sir William Jones* : I have regularly and attentively perused these holy scriptures ; and am of opinion, that this volume, independently of its divine origin, contains more true sublimity, more exquisite beauty, more pure morality, more important history, and finer strains of poetry and eloquence, than can be collected from all other books, in whatever age or language they may have been written.

In his last moments, when his penitence was as great as had previously been his infidelity and his vices, *Lord Rochester*, laying his hand on the Bible, exclaimed with emotion : ‘ Ah, here is true philosophy. Here is the wisdom that speaks to the heart. A bad life is the only grand objection to this book.’

There is no book, said *Selden*, who, on account of his extensive acquirements, was called by Grotius the Glory of England, there is no book upon which we can rest in a dying moment but the Bible.

*Edward VI*, seeing a person once in the council-chamber, take a Bible and stand upon it, for the purpose of reaching some paper then wanted, was much displeased with him for making such a use of so sacred a book ; and rising from his seat, the king took up the sacred volume, and having kissed it, in a very reverent manner, put it in its place again.

And the great *Sir Isaac Newton*, who thought it no dishonour to write a commentary upon a difficult part of Scripture, is said never to have read the name of *God* in the holy volume, without a *sacred pause*.

The Bible is a matchless volume, said the learned

*Boyle* ; it is impossible we can study it too much, or esteem it too highly.

It is, said the profound *Locke*, all pure, all sincere, nothing too much, nothing wanting. Therein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter.

Young man, said the learned *Doctor Johnson*, in his last illness, to a gentleman who sat by his bedside; attend to the advice of one, who possessed some degree of fame in the world, and who will shortly appear before his Maker: 'Read the Bible every day of your life.'

These are but a few, out of many, great men, who have thus voluntarily, and induced by no worldly motive, left on record their belief in and veneration for the blessed Bible; men who were accustomed to prove all things, and to hold fast that which was good.

But, you ask, are there no exceptions to these testimonies? No great men, who have refused to believe in the inspiration of the Scriptures? It is true, there have been here and there one, in different ages, and different countries; here and there a small shade to render the mass of light from the others the more luminous. But this rather confirms the testimonies of the others, that, after having provoked the sternest and bitterest scrutiny, the number of infidels and skeptics is comparatively so few.

But now do you ask, if the Bible be the only text-book to salvation, what then is to become of the Heathen? I reply, Leave them to God; he is wise; he is merciful. Those without the law, will be judged by the law written in their hearts; the law of conscience. But we are not to be their judges. Neither does this lessen our duty. Means are to be used to teach all nations. The Gospel is commanded to be preached to every creature. We must do our part, and leave the event to Him, who judgeth righteous judgment. If what errors of ignorance God will wink at, we know not; this we do know, that now He commandeth all men every where to repent.

Having thus, as we confidently hope, established, beyond any reasonable doubt, the entire credibility of the Holy Scriptures, and the Christian Religion, as the only sure guide to the salvation of man ; and consequently the futility of all other guides, and other religions ; the great question of the text still returns, *What must I do to be saved ?* I answer in the words of Jesus Christ, ' Search the *scriptures*, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.' Again we read, ' All *scripture* is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.' Again, ' Whatever things were written aforetime, were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the *scriptures* might have life.' Again, ' These are *written*, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God ; and that believing, ye might have life through his name.' And again, ' Whoso despiseth the *word*, shall be destroyed; but he that feareth the commandment shall be rewarded.' And yet once again, ' The holy *scriptures* are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' Thus, you perceive, that the way to learn *What you must do to be saved?* is diligently and humbly to search the Scriptures. If you do this, you will soon find, that what they enjoin in order to salvation is simply to believe : ' Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.'

But again, perhaps, will the question return, *What is it to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ ?* Here, I acknowledge, that the answer is less simple, though not less plain. We must believe that, by the fall of Adam, whom God placed as our representative, he and his posterity must have perished, if Jesus Christ had not offered himself to pay the forfeit of our transgressions. ' That Christ was made sin, that is, a sin-offering for us, though he knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; that is, that through the righteousness he has fulfilled, and the atonement he has made, we might be accepted by God as righteous, and be not only pardoned,



but received into his favour.' This demands our utmost gratitude.

But to receive the benefits of this redemption, we must not only believe that Christ is the Way, the Truth, and the Life ; but we must show our faith by our works. This belief especially supposes *a deep remorse for former sins*, for without repentance is no remission of sins ; and a firm resolve to *cease to do evil*. Would you know the dangers of sin, again I say, search the Scriptures. They are full of warning. ' Would you behold the misery entailed upon mankind by malice, look at Cain ; by pride, look at Haman ; by covetousness, look at Ahab ; by profaneness and sensuality, united with the forebodings of a guilty conscience,' look at the shaking Belshazzar. Would you be deterred from the sin of envy, and the horror of an abandonment by your God, let your imaginations summon up Saul. Would you discountenance revenge, show to your heart Herodias ' writhing beneath the accusations of John, and thirsting for his blood.' Or would you recoil from the sin of apostacy from the faith, drag to the light of a murderous self-condemnation the traitorous Judas. If you are thus led to shudder at, and avoid these and similar vices, you will easily adopt and foster their opposite virtues ; you will *learn to do well*.

This *learning to do well* supposes not only a relinquishment of all sin ; but includes also activity in obedience, with prayer, charity and love ; indeed all the fruits of the Spirit. But I cannot better define, and sum up the several christian virtues, than to apply unto ourselves the advice of Saint Paul to the Romans. Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil, cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honour preferring one another ; not slothful in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord ; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer ; distributing to the necessity of saints, given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you, bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but conde-

ascend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. This is the counsel of the great preacher Paul. In another place, he says of sin, that we must not only touch not, taste not, handle not ; but that we must even abstain from all appearance of evil. And above all these things, that we must put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And what says another great preacher, the forerunner of the Messiah ? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. And again, What says the Lord from heaven himself ? ‘ Do unto others, as you would that others,’ in like circumstances, ‘ should do unto you.’ This is the golden rule, worthy to be worn, as the Jews wore their phylacteries, upon the forehead of every one. Finally, the sum of all is, ‘ Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.’ This you can all understand. I can tell you no plainer rule than this. An angel from heaven could tell you no plainer rule than this : ‘ Fear God, and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.’ If we thus manifest our christian faith by our christian virtue, we shall give a practical answer to that great, that increasingly momentous question, *What must I do to be saved ?*

# THE HOLY ANGELS .

## SERMON XXXIX.

**Gen. xlviii, 12.** — AND HE DREAMED, AND BEHOLD A LADDER SET UP ON THE EARTH, AND THE TOP OF IT REACHED TO HEAVEN ; AND BEHOLD, THE ANGELS OF GOD ASCENDING AND DESCENDING ON IT.

IF WE believe the Bible, we must believe that there is somewhere — *where* we know not, nor is it material for us to know, else it had been revealed — but somewhere beyond the bounds of this visible sphere, a Heaven of Heavens, wherein the everlasting God and Christ reside, and where good spirits will go after death ; and that in this Heaven, are different orders of celestial beings, called Angels. As the nature of Angels is a subject not often introduced into the pulpit, yet altogether worthy of a rational curiosity, and full of the most sublime instruction, I propose to discuss, with reverence, in the following discourse, the *Ranks, Attributes, and Employments* of those Holy Beings, such as the patriarch Jacob saw in his vision, ascending and descending on the heavenly ladder.

I. The *Ranks* of the Angels. That there are in Heaven different orders of angels is sufficiently intimated by the variety of names given to them in Scripture. Beside the general appellation of *Angel*, or *Messenger*, derived from their peculiar office ; they are called *Thrones*, and *Dominions*, and *Principalities*, and *Powers*, and *Authorities* ; also *Chief Princes*, and *Elohim*, or *gods*. Sometimes, they are styled *Living Ones* ; sometimes, *Cherubim*, or *Knowing Ones* ; sometimes, *Seraphim*, or

*Burning Ones* ; sometimes, *Watchers*, and *Holy Ones* ; and one is denominated the *Archangel*. We likewise read of some, who are called by name ; as the *man Gabriel*, who stands in the presence of God ; *Michael*, the archangel, who disputed about the body of Moses ; and *Lucifer*, one of the many names given to the Chief Leader of the fallen angels, who were cast out of heaven for sin. The Holy Angels are moreover called '*Morning Stars*, to denote their peculiar beauty and splendour of character ; and not improbably as harbingers of Christ, the Sun of Righteousness : and *Sons of God*, to teach us that they are nearly connected with the Creator, dwell in his house as children, and enjoy his parental presence, care and love.' From a consideration of the above names, it will be manifest that Angels are the highest order of intelligent creatures. This truth is also evident from their being assigned to heaven as their birthplace and residence. The *Living Ones*, mentioned by John in the Apocalypse, are described as being *full of eyes before and behind* ; 'that is, to have been all sense, all intellect, all consciousness ; turning their attention every way ; beholding at once all things within the reach of their understanding ; and discerning them with a clearness of perception, which is the most perfect created semblance of the intuitive and boundless views of the Omniscient Mind.' The exalted rank of Angels is also indicated from the glorious splendour in which these beings have usually appeared in this present world. When the Angel descended to roll away the stone from the sepulchre of the Saviour, his countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow ; and for fear of him, the keepers became as dead men. And St John saw a mighty Angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud ; and a rainbow was upon his head ; and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire. Surely beings thus splendid must be of the most elevated rank in the scale of created intelligences.

II. The *Attributes* of Angels. These are of the noblest kind. *First*, they are endowed with *wonderful power*. This is evident from the fact that the appellative

Power is frequently given to them in the Gospel. David exclaims, Bless the Lord, ye his angels, that excel in *strength*. St John also speaks of a *strong* angel, and a *mighty* angel. The Scriptures furnish proofs of the power of Angels. In three days, an angel destroyed three score and ten thousand persons out of Judah and Israel, when David sinned in numbering the people. In one night, an angel destroyed an hundred and eighty-five thousand men of the army of Sennacherib. St John represents the angels as holding the four winds of heaven ; and as pouring out the vials of God's wrath upon this wicked world. An angel is also exhibited as binding that outrageous and deadly spirit, the Prince of the power of the air, and casting him into the bottomless pit, and as sealing him there, until the thousand years should be fulfilled. Surely then Angels are endowed with almost inconceivable power.

*Secondly*, Angels are possessed of *wonderful activity*. King David says, Who maketh his angels *spirits*; and his ministers a *flaming fire*. Here they are represented as moving with the velocity of winds or spirits, and acting with the resistless energy of an excited flame. The same attribute is taught by the symbol of the *many wings* upon the visioned Cherubim and Seraphim. But the activity of angels is most emphatically illustrated in the case of the prophet Daniel ; where an angel, called the man Gabriel, came down from the supreme Heaven to explain to Daniel the vision and the prophecy, before Daniel had finished his evening prayer. That an angel should thus come from Heaven to earth during the uttering of a prayer exceeds the rapidity of light, and equals the incomprehensible celerity of thought.

*Thirdly*, Angels are *always young*. They are endowed with unfading and immortal youth. This is taught in many parts of Scripture, and forcibly exhibited in the name *Living Ones* given them by St John in the Apocalypse, and by Ezekiel in his prophecies. 'The same doctrine is also beautifully exemplified in the Angels, who appeared to Mary, in the tomb of our Saviour. These illustrious persons were then, at the least, four thousand years old. Still they appeared as young men ; and in all

that long succession of ages had undergone no decay. Their youth, a bright and beautiful blossom, still shone with all its lustre, and fragrance ; and directly indicated, that it was superior both to accident and time ; and would, after many such flights of years, survive in all its vigour ; being destined, as well as fitted, for immortality.'

*Fourthly*, Angels have the *most superior intellectual faculties*. The first name given to Angels, as we read in Genesis, was Cherub, that is, *fulness of knowledge*. Their faculties were at first such as became the sons of God, created to circle, rank above rank, around the throne of Jehovah, and there to minister in all the hallowed and sublime offices of adoration, and dominion ; to sit in the high seats of power, to wear the diadems of distinction, and to bathe in the effulgence of glory, in the eternal kingdom. ' With the nature and extent of their faculties, has the place of their residence in this respect exactly accorded. They have ever dwelt in the world, where truth reigns without opposition ; where knowledge is the universal state and character ; where all mysteries are continually disclosed ; and where the nature and propriety of both the means, and the ends, of providence are, more than in any part of the universe, unfolded. There, day and night, for six thousand years, they have been unceasingly employed in studying the works of God. Weariness and decay they know not. Strength of understanding in them is incapable of being impaired. Every object of investigation is to them delightful ; and every faculty, by its nature, susceptible of improvement. What then must be the extent of their attainments at the present time ?'

*Fifthly*, Angels are *perfectly holy*. This truth is so abundantly evident from the Scriptures, that it needs no particular illustration. Who was it, that rejoiced at the Creation, and sang in transport at the nativity of the Redeemer ? And who rejoice over one sinner that repenteth ? The name Seraphim, or *burning ones*, is also an indication that the mind of an angel is burning with one intense and unquenchable flame of divine love ; such a love, as is suited to those, who stand before a holy God, in his own habitation, enjoy his favour, and fulfil the glorious offices of his kingdom.

*Sixthly, Angels are perfectly lovely.* In this world, we are apt to look too exclusively to external symmetry of form, gracefulness of demeanour, and beauty of complexion, in objects whom we esteem lovely; and these imperfect and unenduring endowments are suffered to fire the passions, and to engross the affections; to blind the reason, and to lead captive the judgment. But the angels have not only every imaginable exterior grace and beauty, but are pre-eminently endued with that virtue, which is the beauty of the mind; that beauty, which is 'as superior to that of the form, as the soul is superior to the tenement in which it dwells.' On this amiable quality, the mind fixes its eye in unwithdrawing approbation; and the heart yields up the fulness of its fondness with unsatiated delight. Virtue is the beauty of the heavenly world; the beauty which alone receives the homage of angels. This is the beauty, which reason will approve, which eternity will never fade, and which will never cease to please.

*Seventhly, Angels are invested with high personal dignity.* To this character, their rank, their abode, and their occupations, all necessarily contribute. What other beings are blessed with that nearness to their Creator, which enables them to understand the mysteries, and contemplate the magnitude of his dispensations, both of providence and of grace? 'Heaven is the centre, and the seat, of all that is great and wonderful, all that is refined and exquisite, all that is splendid and glorious. To angels, these magnificent things are habitually familiar.' Their operations also are of a kind amazingly sublime. Behold one mighty angel holding fast the four struggling winds of heaven. Behold another, throwing his chain around the tremendous prince of the power of the air. And another, in a twinkling, gliding down, like a beam of light, from the throne of God, on an errand of love to man. Is not this a dignity, a sublimity of character, beyond even the stretch of human thought? I need not here recount the splendour and majesty in which angels have frequently appeared, in their visits to this lower world, as they must be familiar to every reader of the Scriptures. Nor need I add, that all these dignified and beautiful attributes of angels are *eternal*.

III. The *Employments of Angels*. That the *offices of Angels* are the *most exalted in the Universe*, is clearly indicated by their *Names*. They are styled *Angels*, that is, the immediate messengers of God. They are styled *Thrones, Dominions, Principalities and Powers*, 'to denote, that they sit upon thrones, exercise dominion, hold authority, preside in government, and are invested with the power, necessary for these great purposes.' They are called *Chief Princes*, to indicate that they are the first order of rulers in the universe under Deity ; and *Sons of God*, to teach us that they are assimilated to God in character and residence. They are called *Morning Stars*, to signify that they outvie all other intelligences in created splendour ; and *Cherubim* and *Seraphim*, to inform us that they are beings furnished with superior discernment in knowledge, and superior ardour in holiness.

*Secondly*, The Angels are often exhibited as nobly employed, in the Scriptures.

1. Angels are engaged in *rendering glory and praise to God*. When the Creator was ordaining and framing this beautiful world in which we live, the angels clustered around his throne, and watched its daily progress ; and when it was finished, the Morning Stars *sang together, and shouted for joy*.

When the Lord Jesus descended on Mount Sinai, amid thunders and lightnings, to publish the Law, he was attended by *the chariots of God, even thousands of Angels*.

When Jesus became incarnate, the angel Gabriel announced his birth to Zachariah, and to Mary. And to the Shepherds, who watched their flocks on the plains of Bethlehem by night, an Angel of the Lord came down, surrounded with a celestial radiance, proclaiming the *tidings of great joy* ; and was immediately accompanied by a *multitude of the heavenly host*, who joined in the triumphant, burning, thrilling chorus, *Glory to God in the highest ! and on earth, peace : good will towards men !*

When the Redeemer *ascended up on high*, and *led captivity captive*, the rejoicing Angels, as he was rising towards the Heaven of Heavens, again broke out into singing, *Lift up your heads, O ye gates ; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors ; and the King of Glory shall come in !*



And when the great Day of Judgment shall come, and Christ shall again descend to judge the quick and the dead ; the Archangel will come before him, blowing the last trump, to break open the graves, and to summon both the living and the dead to meet their Lord in the air.

2. Angels are employed in *studying the works of God*. The stupendous exhibitions of the perfections of God are the things, which the angels desire to look into. For this purpose, these glorious beings are eminently fitted, by their wonderful attributes, and exalted station. As Messengers of God, they visit, not only our world, but the innumerable regions of the Heavens ; to trace out, and examine, and admire the transcendent displays of the wisdom and goodness of God, in the complicated, and seemingly contradictory operations of Providence and Grace. ' Angels visit distant worlds probably with more ease and expedition than men the towns in their neighbourhood ; and compare systems with more perfect comprehension and accuracy, than we, states and kingdoms.' Again. ' Man, by the limited nature of his powers, is almost of course obliged, whenever he studies, to confine himself to study ; and whenever he acts, to action. Angels, by their superior energy, seem fitted to pursue both courses at once ; and to be able to study and act, without hinderance, confusion, or any other disadvantage.'

3. Angels are sent to *execute judgments upon this world*. When Adam and Eve were driven out of the delightful bowers of Paradise, Angels, of the order of the Cherubim, were placed at the east of the garden of Eden, to prevent their return to eat of the tree of life. Angels were sent by God to inflict judgments upon the Israelites ; on the army of Sennacherib ; on Nebuchadnezzar ; and on Herod. In the Apocalypse, Angels are represented by St John as pouring out the vials of divine wrath upon this guilty world. Thus are they sometimes the ministers of God's justice, that his judgments against sin should be made manifest.

4. Angels are sent to *encourage and bless the children of God in this world*. They are called by St Paul ministering spirits to those who shall be heirs of salvation. They descend from heaven, and ascend from the earth,

for this benevolent purpose. 'Thus,' says a great divine, 'Angels *delivered* Lot from Sodom; Jacob from Esau; Daniel from the lions; his three companions from the fiery furnace; Peter from Herod, and the Jewish Sanhedrim; and the nation of the Israelites, successively, from the Egyptians, Canaanites, and Assyrians. Thus they *conducted* Lot, Abraham, and the Israelites, in seasons of great difficulty and danger, to places and circumstances of safety and peace. Thus they conducted Gideon to the destruction of the Midianites, Joseph and Mary to Egypt, Philip to the Eunuch, and Cornelius to Peter, to the knowledge of the Gospel through him, and to the salvation of himself, his family, and his friends. Thus Angels *instructed* Abraham, Joshua, Gideon, David, Elijah, Daniel, Zechariah the prophet, Zachariah the father of John the Baptist, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, and their fellow-disciples. Thus they *comforted* Jacob at the approach of Esau; Daniel in his peculiar sorrows and dangers; Zachariah in the sufferings of his nation; Joseph and Mary in their perplexities; Christ in his agony; the Apostles and their companions after his resurrection; Paul immediately before his shipwreck; and the Church, universally, by the testimony and instruction given in the Revelation of St John.' Finally, the holy Angels are now the blessed agents in conveying the souls of the just to the Paradise of God; and they will be the tremendous agents in severing the wicked from the good, at the day of Judgment. Thus are the Holy Angels the most sublime, the most pure, the most benevolent, the most happy part of all Created Intelligences.

## REFLECTIONS.

1. How *different* are these *holy Angels* from *unholy man*. How will a comparison between the two exalt them, and humble us. The Angels are pure spirit, pure intellect, pure affection, pure devotion. Man is kindred to animals, liable to error, impure in desire, and undevout in worship. The Angels, although clothed with immortality, and living in the heavens, are neither proud nor

vain. Man, although fashioned from the dust, and crawling upon the earth, is both proud and vain. The Angels delight to do the will of their Father in heaven. Man chooses rather to obey his own inclinations on earth. The Angels have no sin, no sorrow, no poverty, no broken hearts, no sickness, no funerals. Man is polluted with sin, bowed down with sorrow, pinched with poverty, crossed in his affections, made pale by sickness, and laid in cold obstruction in the grave. Surely, men are far different from Angels, in this world.

2. How *improved would this world be*, if men would endeavour to *imitate the Angels*. Happy, thrice happy, would be the change over the moral face of this earth. Then should we hear no more of sloth, envy, or malice; of oppression, hypocrisy, or impiety. The neighbour would never slander the neighbour; the son would never despise the wholesome counsel of the father, nor the daughter the tender warnings of the mother. Nations would no longer war against nations. There would be no more robbers upon the road sides, assassins in the secret chambers, nor pirates on the high seas. There would be no more cozening in bargains, nor perjury in courts; no more wasting of the week day, nor profanation of the Sabbath. All would become peace, and love, and harmony; all activity, and humanity, and generosity; all obedience, and resignation, and devotion. Praise would be upon every lip, and incense rise from every altar. The whole world would become one vast and glorious Temple, filled with uplifted worshippers of the true God, and of his glorified Son, our Redeemer. Such would this world become, if men would imitate the holy Angels.

3. We should learn *humility* from the *humility of Angels*. Although the Angels are thus dignified and splendid beings, yet do they not disdain to minister to the relief and comfort of us, children of the dust. They *bring no railing accusations* to excuse themselves from serving such ungrateful, ungracious sinners as we are. They exhibit no haughtiness of character, in selecting the powerful, the wealthy, or the talented, for their approbation, or their favours. *We* are apt to pay homage to men, who have the brightest intellects, however they may pervert

the use of them; or to men, who live in the largest houses, have the most shares in the banks, or the most ships on the seas, little regarding how they may have acquired them. But the holy Angels do not so. They love the humble and contrite spirit, that doeth justly, and regardeth the cry of the poor. In this world, when a virtuous poor man dies, how few of the rich and the noble are found at his funeral. But when even a vicious rich man dies, how is the house thronged, and how long is the sable train of mourners. How different is this, from the humility of the Angels. They look not to what is great, but to what is good. Dives, the worldly great man, died, and was buried. We hear of no angels attending at his burial. Lazarus, the worldly poor man, died, and received the most glorious funeral ever left upon record. He was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. How then does it become us, to learn *humility* from angels.

4. How should we *strive so to live in this world, that hereafter we may go to live with the Angels*. How humbling the thought, that man, who was originally created but a little lower than the angels, soon became so debased by sin, as more to resemble the Fallen, than the Holy Angels. Again, how animating the thought, that man, by a continued life of christian faith, christian trust, and christian obedience, may yet aspire to dwell hereafter with these holy, happy Beings. *In the resurrection*, says our Saviour, the children of God shall be *like to the angels*. If we delight in this world to live among our imperfect and departing friends, how transporting the idea, of going to live forever with such pure, such brilliant, such intellectual, such fervent friends, as the blessed Angels of God. To see them in their ranks, circle above circle, from the lowest Cherub to the highest Seraph; ten thousand and times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; clothed in robes white and clean, their breasts girded with golden girdles, and their hands waving incense from their golden censers. Now they veil their faces, and cast their crowns at the feet of Him, that sitteth on the throne. Now they listen in adoration to the harpers harping on their harps, and to the four *Living Ones*, which rest not day and night, saying, *Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Al-*

*mighty!* while the heavenly hosts respond, and the crystal walls resound, *Worthy is the Lamb, that was slain!* Who would not, to witness such scenes, renounce the pleasures of sin? Who would not cheerfully bid adieu to all that wealth, or ambition, or sensuality, or the united powers of earth, can offer? But if we would be admitted to this glorious company; if we would share in their immortal blessings; we must esteem the things which Angels esteem, love the things which they love, and do the things which they do.

5. From the inspired vision of the heavenly ladder, and the angels of God *ascending and descending on it from heaven to earth*; and from some other intimations in Scripture; how know we, but that the voice of conscience is the voice of some of these benevolent spirits? but that every person on earth is attended by his guardian angel, wherever he goes; to warn him of danger, of temptation, and of sin; to watch over his slumbers, to make soft his pillow in sickness, and to bear his soul at death to the invisible world? Let us then regard each admonition of conscience as the voice of one of these guardian spirits, who is ever near us, although unseen by mortal eyes. How know we, my brethren, but that this church is now filled with these blessed spirits, hovering down from the world of glory, watching the movements of our hearts, and waiting to bear a report to their Father in heaven? Let then each one of us ask his own heart, with fear and trembling, what report he is willing they should bear?

*Finally.* If the Angels are thus dignified, thus happy, thus pure, and yet comparatively *unclean*, and *chargeable with folly*; how exalted, how blessed, how holy, how overwhelmingly glorious, must He be, who created the Angels!

# THE FALLEN ANGELS.

## SERMON XL.

Rev. xii, 7. — AND THERE WAS WAR IN HEAVEN.

How LONG God existed before Angels were created; or how long Angels existed before man was created, are points which are not revealed, and which therefore human philosophy can never discover. Nor is it of consequence for us to know. It is reasonable to believe, however, that the Angels were created immediately after the Heaven of Heavens, which they were to inhabit. Thus they might witness the creation of this world, and all its beautiful garniture; and of man, who was destined to live in, and rule over it.

‘Ecclesiastical writers make an Hierarchy of nine orders of Angels. Others have distributed Angels into nine orders, according to the names by which they are called in Scripture, and reduced these orders into three hierarchies; to the first of which belong Seraphim, Cherubim, and Thrones; to the second, Dominions, Virtues, and Powers; and to the third, Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. The Jews reckon four orders or companies of Angels, each headed by an Archangel; the first order being that of *Michael*, the second of *Gabriel*, the third of *Uriel*, and the fourth of *Raphael*. But though the Jews believe them to be but four, yet it seems, from some intimations in Scripture, that there were seven.’ It is proper to remark, that the names of the angels *Uriel*, and *Raphael*, are only mentioned in the Apocryphal books of *Esdras*, and *Tobit*.

But our subject this day is not of the Holy Angels, but of the Fallen Angels. *And there was war in heaven.*

And can it be, that in that holy, happy world, where the Creator, and the Redeemer, and the Saints reside, there was ever any war? Yes, my brethren, the Scriptures assure us of this mysterious, astonishing fact, that before there was ever any war upon earth, *there was war in heaven.*

‘The fall of the apostate Angels,’ says *Bishop Lowth*, ‘is not directly recorded in the *Old Testament*: but it is implied in the distinction the holy writers make between good and evil spirits; and is sometimes alluded to by the prophets, when they threaten destruction to proud and insolent tyrants, who, in imitation of the pride of the devil, exalt themselves against God and his truth; and are the instruments of Satan in promoting idolatry and wickedness in the world.’ But although we have no regular history of this great and wonderful event, a revolt in the heavenly world, and amongst the highest order of created beings; still we are abundantly assured in the *New Testament*, by various declarations, as well as allusions, that it actually took place. But as assertion, without proofs, is of little weight in so tremendous a proposition, I shall now adduce the testimony, both *direct* and *allusive*.

1. In the *Old Testament*, there is no *direct* testimony of the revolt of Angels. But there is, in *Isaiah*, a most striking allusion to this event, wherein the King of *Babylon* is compared to the Prince of the rebellion: ‘How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! . . . . For thou hast said in thine heart, . . . . I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell.’

In the *New Testament*, the *direct* testimony of the fall of angels is ample and explicit. In *St Luke* we read, ‘And he, Jesus, said unto them, the seventy, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.’ In *St Peter* we read, ‘For if God spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.’ In *St Jude* we read, ‘And the angels, which kept not their first estate, but left their *own habitation*, he hath reserved in everlasting

chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.' And in the Apocalypse of *St John* we have an amplification of our text: '*And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the Dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great Dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*'

The *indirect* evidence of the fall of Angels is abundant. In *St Matthew* we read, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, *prepared* for the Devil and his angels.' In Timothy, *St Paul* says a bishop must not be a new convert, 'lest being lifted up with *pride*, he fall into the condemnation of the Devil.' Here the cause of the revolt is asserted, namely, *pride*. And in the Revelation of *St John*, we read of the final destiny of the fallen Angels. 'And I saw an Angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and after that, he must be loosed a little season.' After this little season, in the same chapter we are told, 'And the Devil, that deceived them, viz, the nations, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, . . . . and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.' Such is the testimony in Scripture concerning the unnatural revolt, and tremendous doom, of the rebel Angels.

2. As to what *time*, and for what *offence*, these Angels incurred the displeasure of the Almighty, it is not known. The *time* in which this event took place is generally allowed to have preceded the creation of the world; 'and some have accounted for it by the supposition, that the angels, being informed of God's purpose to create man after his own image, and to dignify his nature by Christ's assuming it, and thinking their glory to be thus eclipsed, envied the happiness of man, and thus revolted.' 'But



whatever was the occasion, or the mode by which it was manifested, *pride* seems to have been the leading sin of the Angels, and it ultimately terminated in rebellion and apostacy. Of these fallen angels there is supposed to have been a *great number*; and it is apprehended that there was some kind of gradation or subordination among them; one being considered as their prince, and called by several names.' This accords with the conception of this revolt given by the great Poet. Speaking of Satan, he says:

— ' he it was, whose guile,  
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceived  
The mother of mankind, what time his *pride*  
Had cast him out from Heaven, with *all his host*  
Of rebel Angels; by whose aid, aspiring  
To set himself in glory above his peers,  
He trusted to have equall'd the Most High,  
If he oppos'd; and, with ambitious aim  
Against the throne and monarchy of God,  
Raised impious *war in heaven*, and battle proud,  
With vain attempt. Him th' Almighty Power  
Hurled headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,  
With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
'To bottomless perdition; there to dwell  
In adamant chains and penal fire,  
Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.'

3. It appears, that the revolt was but *one*, and at *one time*, in heaven. By the phrase, and the Angels, who kept not their first estate, but *left their own habitation*, it is generally admitted that heaven is intended; the place where the Angels were united around the throne of God. Some divines, however, have supposed that the word translated *habitation* means some *other world*, and that they left the station there assigned them, and refused to perform the duty allotted to them by their Creator. Be this as it may, we are informed that they were banished from the presence of God, and the company of the Angels who kept their integrity, and were cast into hell. How great was the number of the Fallen Angels, we know not with certainty. But if we may conjecture from the metaphorical vision of the *great red Dragon*, in the Apocalypse, *whose tail drew the third part of the stars of*

heaven, and did cast them to the earth; and this be allowed to have a primary allusion to the rebellion in heaven; then was *one third* of the whole hierarchy of Angels and Archangels seduced into this sacrilegious revolt.

4. *Where* the Hell is, into which the Fallen Angels were cast; or what is the *peculiar nature* of the punishment they endure; various have been the conjectures of the christian Fathers, and of modern Philosophers. But as the one has not been revealed, and the other is revealed in symbolical language, it is not *only* useless, but perhaps presumptive in us to inquire. Suffice it to say, that there is *somewhere* in the Universe such a World of Despair; where is

‘No light; but rather darkness visible  
Serves only to discover sights of wo,  
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes,  
That comes to all; but torture without end.’

That these torments are described by metaphors, which indicate the deepest intensity of suffering, of which the mind can conceive; and that its duration is tremendously asserted as, where *Hope never enters*; and that a *great gulf* is fixed to separate between Hell and Heaven.

5. What is to be the *fulfilment of the destiny* allotted to the Fallen Angels is amply declared in Scripture. It appears, that the punishment and degradation of these evil beings are not yet completed. That, since their fall, they have been acting out their vicious natures in tempting and deceiving this world, for many centuries. That their great Captain, the Arch-Apostate, is to be bound, during the Millennium, for a thousand years. That, after this, he is to be let loose for a little season, during which he will again deceive the nations, and rage with tenfold violence. And that, in the midst of this reign of the Man of Sin, the Judgment will commence. That during the Judgment, these Fallen Angels will be tried, and condemned, ‘for all the evils, which they will have wrought, or attempted, during the continuance of this earthly system.’ And that, at this Judgment of Angels and men, immediately after which this earth is to be burnt up, sen-

tence will be openly passed, and finally executed upon the apostate Angels, who will be remanded to their Prison of Despair :

‘There to converse with everlasting groans,  
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,  
Ages of hopeless end.’

Such is the concise account, in the Holy Scriptures, of the announcement, and final issue, of that most mysterious, and appalling event, the *War in Heaven* ; and which is calculated to lead the mind to many profitable reflections.

#### REFLECTIONS.

1. Were it not for Revelation, we should have had knowledge of neither good, nor evil Angels. But, abstractedly considered, the existence of Angels is no more improbable, than the existence of Man. Neither is it so much so. For surely, it seems less wonderful, that a spiritual Creator should create an order of beings of pure spirit, than a race of compound beings, of spirit and matter united. But, beside the relation above given, of the character and defection of a certain part of the Angels ; the existence and mischievous intent of the Arch-Deceiver is felt and traced, from the beginning to the end of Scripture, both the Old and New. He is met under a great variety of names ; as, most commonly, the *Devil* and *Satan*. Sometimes he is called *Lucifer*, and *Belial*, and *Bēelzebub*. Sometimes he is styled, as in the Apocalypse, ‘the Angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is *Abaddon*, but in the Greek tongue he hath his name *Apollyon*.’ At other times he is called the *Prince of the power of the air*, the *old Serpent*, the *great Dragon*, the *arch Fiend*, the *Father of lies*, the *calumniator*, *adversary*, *destroyer*, and a *murderer from the beginning*. The Fallen Angels were also called by the Greeks *Dæmons*.

2. That Angels, originally created holy, should fall, is not more difficult, perhaps, to believe ; than that Man,

who was originally created upright, should fall. In the fall of the former, the temptation was doubtless proportionably stronger, than in that of the latter. Nor was the Creator any more obliged to secure Angels from falling, than to secure Man from falling. In both cases, they were undoubtedly created with power

‘Sufficient to have stood, tho’ free to fall.’

Nor is it any more improbable, that the Fallen Angels should know the thoughts of men, and interfere in the affairs of mankind, if permitted thus to do, for wise purposes; than that the Holy Angels should thus know, and be thus allowed to act. But as to the manner *how* either of them communicate their ideas, and influences to mankind, *we know not*. It is sufficient, that we are assured of the fact.

3. That the Fallen Angels do thus interfere in influencing mankind to sin, and to become as one of them, we are fearfully certified throughout the Scriptures. Who was it, that tempted the first happy couple, in the Garden of God? Who was it, that led upright Job to curse the day wherein he was born? And who was it, that led even Christ up into the wilderness to be tempted? Do not the good Angels sometimes have to interpose, to protect mankind from the pernicious suggestions of the evil Angels? Did not the great archangel Michael contend against Satan, when he disputed about the body of Moses; that is, as some suppose, *the Jewish church after the captivity*; or, more probably, ‘to make the place of his burial known to the Israelites, in order to tempt them to *worship him*, as the Papiſts do the bones of martyrs real or supposed?’ These invisible, and malignant Spirits, urged by a principle of enmity to God, and envy and hatred against mankind, do their utmost to seduce men into vice; and for that intent are engaged in studying men’s tempers, and making observations on the diversified circumstances and situations of their lives. They use immense influence in devising, and propagating ingenious, but fatal delusions. Being substances entirely spiritual, they can, at any time, assume bodies, and appear in human or unhuman shapes.

Sometimes, therefore, to insinuate themselves into the affections, and avoid suspicion, these *angels of darkness* transform themselves into *angels of light*. And sometimes, they are 'made use of as the instruments of divine Providence, to inflict calamities on the children of men ; whilst their malicious attempts are overruled by the superior wisdom and goodness of God, to answer the purposes of his government.'

4. If the Fallen Angels are thus forming their devices against mankind, how does it become us to watch and pray, lest we enter into temptation. How should we especially guard our hearts against undue *pride*, and unlawful *ambition* ; those two sins, which caused the Angels to fall ; those two sins, which once scattered the builders of Babel over the face of the earth, and afterwards hung Haman upon his own gallows. The rather, let us encourage the christian virtue of *humility*. Whatever blessings we enjoy, let us be therewith content ; and not repine, if we see another higher than ourselves. Let us imitate the good Angels, and never bring a *railing accusation* against even bad men, but leave it to the Lord to rebuke them. The good Angels, says *Archbishop Tillotson*, 'have no disposition, and I believe they have no talent, or faculty, for railing ; the cool consideration whereof should make all men, especially those who call themselves *divines*, and especially in controversies about religion, ashamed and afraid of this manner of disputing.'

5. The Angels were condemned for *one* revolt ; Adam was condemned for *one* transgression. How then shall we escape, who have so many times revolted, so many ways transgressed ? The goodness of God, if it do not lead men to repentance, will no more secure them from condemnation ; 'than the creating kindness of God induced him to spare such as sinned in heaven itself.' We must not only, like the fallen Angels, believe and tremble ; but we must believe and obey the Gospel. We must resist the Devil, if we would have him flee from us. The *roaring lion*, while *seeking whom he may devour*, will then be met and foiled by the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*. 'Faith, prayer, a holy life, and patient continuance in well doing, are the weapons with which the Saints have always

conquered ; and if we go forth in the same armour, and fight in the same manner, we also shall triumph.' Then, let Satan and his legions devise mischief against the church, Christ and his mighty host will oppose and prevail against him. Let Michael and his angels fight against the Dragon and his angels, and neither the church, nor the trembling, penitent soul, need to fear. While the Adversary is lying in ambush, and hurling his fiery darts at the virtuous soul, some good Spirit will hover over, and cover it with his protecting wings.

Finally. If in this life of probation, we imitate the Angels, who *made war even in heaven*, we must expect to go hereafter to live with them, in a world, which is all War, and Want, and Wo. But if in this life we imitate the Angels, who have ever held fast their integrity, we may cherish the sublime hope of being admitted, at death, through the merits of the mighty Angel of the Covenant, to the participation of the profound knowledge of the Cherub, the glowing zeal of the Seraph, and the pre-eminent dignity of the Archangel, in a world, which is all Life, and Liberty, and Love.

## STORY OF JONAH.

### SERMONS XLI AND XLII.

*Jonah* i, 1—2. — NOW THE WORD OF THE LORD CAME UNTO JONAH, THE SON OF AMITTAI, SAYING, ARISE, GO TO NINEVAH, THAT GREAT CITY, AND CRY AGAINST IT; FOR THEIR WICKEDNESS IS COME UP BEFORE ME.

IN THE midst of the obscure Prophecies, we find this remarkable and marvellous, but plain and instructive Story of Jonah. Though placed after Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel, and even four of the minor prophets, Jonah is the most ancient of the whole of them. He lived in the reign, and predicted the successes of Jeroboam, above eight hundred years before Christ. The book is rather a Narrative, than a Prophecy; for it contains *but one prophecy*, and that of *but one line*. Jonah was a native of Gath-hepher, in Galilee; a town in the tribe of Zebulon, in a remote corner of the Holy Land. Jonah and Jonas are the same name. Jonah signifies a *Dove*; but Jonah had not a very dove-like disposition. Nineveh, that great city, was built by Nimrod, soon after the Flood. It was on, or near the Tigris, and was the proud and idolatrous metropolis of the Assyrian empire. The events of the story are so extraordinary, that some explain it as an allegory; and others have profanely ridiculed it. But our Lord himself hath repeatedly attested its truth, and referred to its most incredible event, as a type of his own burial and resurrection. Jonah's impartiality in recording his own sins is peculiar to the sacred writers. Jonah himself probably wrote this Narrative. It is as follows.

## FIRST MISSION.

Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amittai, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it ; foretell the judgments coming upon it ; for their wickedness is come up before me. Nineveh, this very great, and very ancient city, was now in its glory. It was a three days' journey through, or around the city. Nineveh was much larger than Babylon. It was about nineteen miles long, and eleven broad. Its walls were a hundred feet high, and so thick that three chariots might go abreast upon them. On the walls, at intervals, were fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high. It was formerly necessary to include within the walls gardens and fields, for cultivation, and pasturage, which rendered the cities so large. But this great city was a greatly wicked city. The Ninevites were notorious for their luxury and effeminacy. Jonah ' was sent as a herald at arms, in the name of the God of heaven, to proclaim war with Nineveh.' Arise, go to Nineveh, and preach unto it. But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord, and went down to Joppa ; and he found a ship going to Tarshish ; so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish. Joppa, now Jaffa, was a seaport town, said to be about forty miles from Gath-hepher, which Jonah left ; and in the opposite direction from Nineveh. Tarshish, though the word may signify any maritime place of trade, is generally supposed here to mean Tartessus in Spain. 'The mission was disagreeable, the journey was long and hazardous. Perhaps he thought that they might repent and be forgiven, and that then he might be branded as a false prophet ; or that the king of Assyria might destroy him ; in all this he showed great want of faith and resignation to God.' Whatever he thought, he sought to flee from the presence of the Lord. But the Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his own god, or tutelar deity ;



and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them ; but Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship ; and he lay, and was fast asleep. Though the most guilty person, he was the least affected, as is too commonly the case. So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not. The shipmaster or pilot, though a heathen, speaks of one God as supreme, considering the others as mediators only. Thus he, who ought now to have been reproving the Ninevites, was himself justly reproved by an idolatrous shipmaster. And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is upon us. This was the usual method of referring cases to the determination of Providence. They believed that some one of their gods had raised the storm, to punish the sins of some one in the ship ; and that Providence would direct the lot to fall upon the guilty one. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah. The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposal thereof is of the Lord. Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us ? What is thine occupation ? And whence comest thou ? What is thy country ? And of what people art thou ? And he said unto them, I am a Hebrew ; and I fear the Lord, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land. Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this ? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the Lord, because he had told them. The men were affrighted, and in confusion, seeing Jonah a decent, sober looking man. Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us ? For the sea wrought, and was tempestuous. And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea ; so shall the sea be calm unto you ; for I know that for my sake this great tempest is upon you. A most generous confession and proposal of Jonah. Nevertheless, the men rowed hard to bring the vessel to the land, but they could not ; for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them. Wherefore they cried unto the Lord ; not as before every

one to his idol god; but unto Jonah's God, who they now knew had brought the tempest; and said, We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood; for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee; we are acting by thy command. So they took up Jonah, and reluctantly cast him forth into the sea; and the sea ceased from her raging. Then the men feared the Lord exceedingly, and offered, or made vows to offer, a sacrifice unto the Lord. Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the swallow of the fish three days and three nights. Some have thought that the word *fish* must have meant a *boat*. But the fish is in another part of Scripture called a *whale*. Some have conjectured, that the fish was a *shark*; and say that the throat of a whale is not large enough to swallow a man; and that the whale is seldom, if ever, found in the Mediterranean Sea. The learned *Abbe Grosier*, as cited by *Jebb*, thinks however that it was a whale, as we have it translated. He says it could not have been a shark. 'That fish is furnished with five or six ranges of teeth, placed in each jaw, after the manner of a palisade, which must have prevented the safe ingress and egress of the prophet.' But in the whale, 'the throat is large, and provided with a bag ... so considerable in size, that whales frequently take into it two of their young when weak, especially during a tempest. In this vessel there are two vents, which serve for inspiration and respiration; and here, in all probability, Jonah was preserved; not indeed without miracle, but with that *economy of miracle*, so frequently exemplified in Scripture.' But it is of little use to endeavour to render less miraculous, what was undoubtedly intended to be received as a great miracle.

Now Jonah, finding himself thus preserved from suffocation by a miracle, took encouragement to pray; for no place is unsuitable for prayer; and he afterwards thus recorded the workings of his heart while in his swimming sepulchre, in a beautiful ode. I cried, he says, by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell, that is, the grave, where he was, as it were, buried alive; out of the belly of the grave,

cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the *deep*, in the midst of the *seas*; and the *floods* compassed me about; all thy *billows* and thy *waves* passed over me. His imagination seems filled with *waters*. The seaweeds, he continues, were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains. Yet, he adds, When my soul fainted within me, I remembered the Lord; and my prayer came in unto thee. Such, and more also, was the prayer, and the glorious triumph of faith, of Jonah, in his living grave. And after three days and three nights; that is, a part of three natural days, as in the case of our Lord probably; the Lord spake unto the fish, and it cast out Jonah upon the dry land; or, so near the shore, that he could easily wade to the land. Thus ended Jonah's *first mission*.

#### SECOND MISSION.

After this, the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the *second time*, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee; or shall bid thee, when thou comest thither. It was necessary to prove Jonah's repentance, by sending him again upon the same mission. And it was great condescension in God, again to employ Jonah, after his former disobedience. So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord. Now Nineveh, being, as we said, near sixty miles round, was a city of three days' journey. A day's journey for a man on foot was, at that time, reckoned about twenty miles. And Jonah began to enter from the gate into the city a day's journey; and he cried, and said, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. This was the alarming burthen of his cry, Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown. This was the cry, through the principal streets, Yet forty days; leaving them a space for repentance. So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. Jonah wrought no miracle, nor showed any sign, that we read of, yet the people believed; per-

haps from Jonah's being a Hebrew ; or perhaps from having heard of his miraculous preservation when cast into the sea ; or perhaps from feeling self-convicted of their own guilt. For even the king of Nineveh, when word came unto him, arose from his throne, and threw off his gorgeous robe ; and, to set a humble example, he put on the habit of a mourning penitent ; he covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. And the king, and his nobles, issued a decree, that neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, in Nineveh, should taste any thing ; they should not feed, nor drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God ; yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not ? Even the beasts were covered with mourning ; and kept without food and water, that their moaning might move the people. And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way ; and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them ; and he did it not. God changed, when the people changed. He saw their humiliation ; he saw that they were true penitents, and he spared them for this time.

But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. He rather should have rejoiced in this great mercy ; but he was vexed from his selfish concern for his own credit as a prophet. And he prayed unto the Lord, and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country ? Therefore, I fled before thee unto Tarshish. He pleads this as an excuse for his former disobedience ; saying, I thought that it would be so ; that thou wouldst pardon them ; and then my countrymen would say, I was not sent by thee to Nineveh. For, he continues, for I knew that thou art a gracious God, and merciful. How strange, that Jonah, and a prophet of the Lord too, should mention these endearing traits of God's mercy, only to complain of them. But such, and so wicked, are we. Therefore now, O Lord, he prays, take, I beseech thee, my life from me ; for it is better for me to die, than to live. Then said the Lord, Dost thou well to be angry ? So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on

the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see, for certainty, what would become of the city. But the leaves of the arbour quickly withered, we suppose ; and therefore the Lord God *prepared*, for this seems to be Jonah's favourite word, prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd. The gourd, as it is called, was perhaps the *palma Christi*, or ivy ; or some other broad-leaved plant. He was very glad ; 'for a gourd in season, may be a greater blessing than a cedar out of season.' He was very glad of the gourd for his own personal comfort, but sullen and fretful that God should spare a great and crying city. The gourd was the *second miracle* performed for Jonah in this Story. But God prepared a worm, when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered. And when the sun arose, God prepared a vehement east wind ; which, by coming over the burning sands that lay to the east of Nineveh, became very sultry ; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die ; and said, It is better for me to die, than to live. And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd ? And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death ; to be angry, as long as I live ; yea, to break my heart with anger. Here the Lord graciously argues with Jonah. Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow ; which came up in a night, and perished in a night. And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons, that cannot discern between their right hand, and their left hand ; and also much cattle ? As if he had said, Jonah, thou thinkest it a pity, that so beautiful and refreshing a plant should be so soon destroyed, and thou wouldest have had it spared ; and should not I spare this great city, in which are a hundred and twenty thousand children, which cannot discern between good and evil ? From the large number of children, under two years of age probably, it is likely there were in the city six hundred thousand human creatures ; and the innocent

children, and cattle, would have been involved in the common destruction. Even the cattle, he continues, are of more value, than the withering gourd. But the inhabitants are immortal souls, and shall I not much more spare them? And the children especially, shall I not spare the city for their sakes? A forcible argument, to bring the rebellious and passionate spirit of Jonah to reflection, and repentance; and which probably did so, although it is not thus recorded. For surely, after this solemn and humbling expostulation from God himself, he could not but hasten to exercise his prophetic functions, with a more exemplary sense of his own evil heart, and of the sacredness of his office. Thus ended Jonah's *second mission*.

Thus did the Lord pardon Nineveh for this time; although, about a hundred years afterwards, having relapsed into its former sins, the City, as two prophets, Nahum and Zephaniah, had foretold, was taken and destroyed.

The great Moral of the Story is, God's pardoning *repenting sinners*, as he did at Nineveh; and his long-suffering with *repining saints*, as it was shown to Jonah.

#### INSTRUCTION.

*First Mission.*—1. We are taught that those who are God's ministers must be prepared for unreserved obedience, and to go on any emergency, and to any place, when the Lord shall call them. For this ready obedience, they should cherish a humble spirit of faith, patience, and self-denial. The fear of danger, or the love of ease, must yield to the duty of honouring and serving God. There is always more danger in disobeying, than in obeying, any command of God.

2. Jonah fled from God, but God, by his judgments, overtook him. We cannot flee from the presence of God. If we run from him, we but run towards his, and our enemy, Satan. Even the Heathen sailors reprov'd Jonah for his wickedness, and inconsistency of character.

So, if Christians profess one thing, and do another; look one way, and walk a contrary; even infidels will have cause to reproach and condemn.

3. We notice, that even these heathen mariners so exercised the natural dictates of reason and conscience, as to have a confiding sentiment of an overruling Providence in the casting of a lot; that when the lot was cast into the lap, the whole disposal thereof was of the Lord. And also, that they were scrupulous about shedding innocent blood. In these, even some Christians may feel that they do not improve their bright sun of Revelation, so well as did the heathen their dim star-light of Nature.

4. From the practice and success of Jonah, while in his floating grave, we may learn the propriety and efficacy of prayer. We may be placed, by the will of God, in some situation, where we cannot, any better than Jonah could, avail ourselves of the prayers of the church, or of any pious persons; but, if we have prayer, must pray for ourselves; as, indeed, we ought always to do. And as Jonah, in his prayer, used many of devout David's expressions; so should we treasure up in our hearts the pious words and meditations of the saints in the Bible, to aid us in our prayers and thanksgivings to their, and our God.

5. We learn, from the apparently helpless state of Jonah, while in the sea, and far beneath any human aid, never to despair of God's omnipotent mercy, even to the most rebellious of sinners, if they call upon him. If we descend into the deep, behold God is even there. It seemed impossible, that Jonah's life could be saved, after he was thrown headlong into the raging sea. But God could save him, and did save him, even there. And to do it, he performed a miracle, such as was never heard of before. And if Jonah, by the power of God, could live in the body of a fish; surely there can be no more unlikely or perilous place, from which God cannot rescue us. We are also taught, by the example of Jonah, to render thanks to God for his goodness, even in our severest trials; and when we vow to God, if he should relieve and restore us, always to be ready to pay to God that we have vowed.

6. Jonah was not only a type of Christ, by voluntarily laying down his life for the salvation of others; but the miracle done upon Jonah in the sea was a lively and very exact type of the death, burial, and resurrection of our Saviour, which occurred above eight hundred years after. And Christ prophesied of himself, that so long as Jonas was in the whale's belly, should be the Son of Man in the heart of the earth. And as this miracle of deliverance established the character of Jonah as a Prophet, so did the resurrection of Christ declare that he was the Messiah.

*Second Mission.*—7. In Jonah's *second mission*, we are taught, by the example of the Ninevites, the importance of national prayer, and the fasting of humiliation; especially in times of great moral delinquencies. The Ninevites, when warned to repent, or expect God's righteous judgments, cried mightily unto God, and humbled themselves as a people, even from the king to the servant, and put on the sackcloth, and sat in the ashes, of mourning. So we, if we do not give credence, and bestir ourselves, when we perceive God's providences, and read his warnings, do worse than these heathens did, and must expect heavier condemnations.

8. We perceive, that the king of Nineveh, when he made proclamation for a fast and prayer, also exhorted every one to turn from his evil way. So we, when convinced of sin, and earnest to avert the consequences of it, must not only pray, but act; not only repent, but reform. Reformation is the only true evidence of repentance. They that observe lying vanities, said Jonah in his prayer, forsake their own mercy.

9. We should take warning by Jonah, not to indulge in a fretful, unsatisfied disposition; and especially to guard against all exhibitions of selfishness, or passionate rashness. Jonah probably, when he denounced the judgments upon the Ninevites, exhorted them to repent, and encouraged them in hope of a reversal if they did so. But when they repent, and are spared, he is angry. So he was exceeding glad of his gourd, and exceeding angry again when it died. This teaches even pious people the



necessity of watching their hearts, and ruling their spirits, before God, lest they provoke him to plague them with their own devices.

10. Doest thou well to be angry? This question, which God condescended to ask Jonah, we should always ask ourselves, whenever we are disposed to repine, if at any time God should think fit to take away any of our gourds; to send a worm to the root of any of our temporal comforts. And particularly, if, in order that others may receive a great blessing, we thereby should suffer a small disadvantage.

11. The gourd was but the daughter of a night. It came up in a night, and it perished in a night. Such is the emblem of human life, that has its root in the earth. The grace of the fashion of it soon passes away. A worm is at the root of every earthly enjoyment; a worm seen or unseen. And perhaps the gladder we are of our gourds, the sooner God causes them to wither, that we may plant our hopes upon the rock of ages. Thus do we grieve for the loss of a shadow. But if one gourd wither, God can cause another to spring up in its room. And let us not, because we have lost our gourd, so repine as to lose our God also.

12. We are taught the wonderful forbearance of God. Instead of killing Jonah at his word, he stoops to expostulate with him. We are also taught his regard for his creatures. He pleads, in extenuation of his sparing this great, but wicked city, not only their penitence, but that there were in it a vast number of little children, and also much cattle. Surely this humanity of God should move our hearts, as it doubtless did the hearts of the reprieved Ninevites.

13. Nineveh repented, when warned that they had but forty days to live. So we should be alarmed, if we were sure we should not live a month; and yet we are unconcerned, although we are not sure that we shall live a day. But as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of Man be to this generation.

14. From the mercy of God to the wicked city of Nineveh, we may take great encouragement to hope for mercy, if we humble ourselves, and repent of our sins, as

they did. Who can tell, but God may turn from his fierce anger, and spare us? If that nation, says God himself, against whom I have *pronounced*, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. Such goodness in God should lead, not only the nation, but each individual into repentance. Otherwise, the men of Nineveh shall rise up in judgment with our generation, and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, in his holy Gospel, and daily preaching to us, *a greater than Jonas is here.*

## ANTEDILUVIAN HEADS.

### SERMON XLIII.

1 *Chron.* i, 1 — 4. — ADAM, SHETH, ENOSH, KENAN, MAHALALEEL, JERED, HENOC, METHUSELAH, LAMECH, NOAH.

THESE Names stand like epitaphs upon tombstones. They stand like milestones along the space. Here are ten Heads of Families of the World before the Flood. Here are the Antediluvian Patriarchs from Adam to Noah. I called these Names epitaphs. They are rather cenotaphs. For no grave-yard now contains their bones ; no unmouldered urn their ashes. What a rushing and continuous train of thought is suggested by these ten simple names. These Names include a History of sixteen and a half centuries. And the only true history in the world of these men, and the wonderful events of their times, is recorded in the brief space of the first six or seven chapters of Genesis. The account of the Creation was probably given to Adam, either by inspiration of God, or by one of his holy angels, who used at that time to visit our earth on heavenly messages. And from Adam, this account was handed down by tradition, through these ancient patriarchs, from one to another, until the Flood. And thence, very easily, it passed from Noah to the historian Moses, who recorded and published it. Nor is this tradition impossible, or even unlikely. For the most of these ten men lived upwards of nine hundred years, each one ; and the youngest, if we except Henoch, lived near eight hundred years ; and it can be proved, that their lives so overlapped, that one might very readily communicate, either immediately, or mediately, with another

No notice is taken, in this line of names, of any other sons of Adam, because it was designed to mention *his name only*, in whose loins were Christ and his Church. For the Sun of Righteousness was hereafter to arise, and burst, with his healing beams, through these early ages of eclipse.

*Adam*, the first name in our line, leads us to think of Paradise and Eden. It is melancholy, that it is not known where Eden was. Of the four rivers, the Pison, the Gihon, and the Hiddekel, are dried up in their beds, or changed in their courses by the Flood ; and the Euphrates is not certain to be the same now thus named. And the land of Havilah, where was the gold that was good, and the bdellium, and the onyx-stone, is not known. Many spots are dotted out upon the maps, as the different supposed seat of Paradise, which variety only shows its uncertainty. Paradise is, however, almost universally allowed to have been somewhere in Syria, in Asia. Paradise means *a garden planted with trees*. Eden, *pleasure or delight*. Adam signifies *earthy or red*, or, as some think, the generic name *man*. Eve means *living*, because she was to be the universal mother. Adam being made, not born of woman, and also Eve, they herein differed from us. But how little room was there for pride in one, who was so near akin to the dust, as Adam. Marriage was first ordained in Eden ; and Eve was taken out from near the heart of the man, to signify that the husband should love the wife. And if one wife had not been the proper number for happiness to both parties, God would doubtless have made more for Adam, especially as then the whole world was to be peopled by him. The Sabbath was also first instituted in Paradise ; and the Sabbath was the next, or *first* whole day, in the life of Adam and Eve. In this happy Garden stands Adam, made in the moral image of God, himself the appointed lord of this lower creation, with the whole future world in his loins. This was a joyous time, when God talked with man, as one friend talketh with another ; and when the blessed Angels used to descend, and glide over, and alight down on the earth. In this blissful state, if Adam and

Eve had remained long enough to have had children born to them, their little infants, the beauteous birds of Paradise, would probably have been translated, in due time, from the earthly Garden, to sing upon the branches of the Tree of Life in Heaven. But the tremendous Fall too soon threw a pall over the earth. Some think the tempter serpent was a fallen seraph ; and the apple, and the tasting it, an allegory. But no matter. The effect is too evident. Sin is in the world, alive and loose, however it came. It is unknown, how long Adam continued in Paradise ; probably not a year. It is generally thought, and so we hope, that Adam and Eve were personally pardoned. But Adam, it seems, communicated to his offspring his lapsed, not his restored nature. Adam lived above nine hundred years after his expulsion from the Garden. Eve's age is unrevealed ; and it is remarkable, that the age of but one woman is recorded in Scripture. The first Adam soon fell ; but there is a second Adam. Christ is now the Tree of Life, in the midst of the Garden. As Eve was taken out of Adam's side, so afterwards was the church, our Lord's bride, taken out of his bleeding side.

*Sheth*, or *Seth*, is the second name in our line. As Adam was made in the image of God, so was Seth born in the image of Adam ; that is, fallen, frail, mortal, like himself. Adam indeed had two sons, some think they were twins, before he begat Seth ; but one of them was slain without issue, the other was accursed. Here see the effects of the Fall. The first man born of woman was a murderer ; the second was a martyr. What was the mark set upon Cain, to insure his life, while a vagabond in the earth, we know not. Cain, after his murder, wandered eastward of Eden, to the land of Nod, which means *exile* ; where we find his wife first mentioned, who must have been his own sister, or niece ; as we read that Adam had other sons and daughters. Cain's descendants were wicked, but ingenious. The first Lamech, one of Cain's posterity, was the first who took unto himself two wives, and thus introduced bigamy and polygamy into the world. This Lamech's children, by his two wives, were the first graziers, and organists, and braziers, that we read of in

history. But all the descendants of wicked Cain perished in the Deluge. Therefore, the name of Seth only was recorded in the genealogy, as the head of connexion between these primitive Fathers. In the days of Seth, began men to call upon the name of the Lord.

Of the other Names, in succession, there is nothing said, until you come to *Henoch*, or *Enoch*. This Enoch is the one called the seventh from Adam, because there were two others of the like name ; one the son of evil Cain, another the son of good Seth ; for *Henoch* and *Enoch*, and perhaps *Enosh* and *Enos* also, are but one name in their original. This Enoch was the central star of the patriarchal firmament. For though little is said of him, yet what more could be comprehended in his eulogy ? He walked with God. Hand in hand, as it were, he walked with God on earth ; and afterwards, at an early age for those times, he walked with God into heaven, body and soul, without death. By faith, Enoch was translated, that he should not see death. God often takes away those soonest, that he loves the best.

Although but little, as we have seen, is said about Sheth and Henoch ; yet still less is recorded of Enosh, Kenan, Mahalaleel, Jered, and Lamech the second. Of these five, the sacred historian has thought fit to give us only their names and ages. All we can gather of some of these primitive patriarchs, and this is very uncertain, is from the interpretation of their names. Adam, we before remarked, signifies *earthy man*, or *red*. Sheth or Seth means *substituted*. Enosh or Enos, *mortal*. Kenan or Cainan, *the nest*, or *one that laments*. Mahalaleel, *he that praises God*. Jered or Jared, *he that descends or rules*. Henoch or Enoch, *dedicated*. Methuselah or Methusalem, *he dieth, and water is sent forth*. Lamech, *poor, made low*. And Noah or Noë, *rest or consolation*. As to their ages, the youngest, who did not live out half his days, before he was transferred to heaven, yet lived three hundred and sixty-five years. These long lives were then necessary, in order to people the infant earth. It is supposed that, in these early times, men dressed in the skins of beasts offered in sacrifice. And that, notwithstanding people lived so long, no animal food

was eaten until after the Flood. So little is revealed respecting five or six of the ten antediluvian fathers, that it is not certain, although it is generally concluded, that they were all good men. We have reason to think, they were all men of eminence, as well as of prudence and piety, in their day. And if not much is said, or known of them, it is the same now of many great and good men. But goodness is the only true greatness. One thing is certainly said of each one, except Enoch, and which will be said of us — *And he died*. These men have been gone to Judgment above four thousand years; some near five thousand. And if they were pious men, as we suppose, however obscure may be their names on earth, they are not obscure in heaven. And there were giants in the earth in those days; mighty men, men of renown. The sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair, and they bare these giant children upon the earth. The sons of God are commonly thought to have been the children of pious Seth, and the daughters of men the children of wicked Cain, who intermarried after the world became corrupted. Grace, says Matthew Henry, does not run in the blood, but corruption does. A sinner begets a sinner, but a saint does not beget a saint.

Of Methuselah, Noah's grandfather, we only know that he was the oldest man that ever lived. He lived almost a thousand years. This was a great while for an immortal soul to inhabit a house of clay. But none can challenge life by a long proscription. *Methuselah*, or *Mathusala*, for the most of Hebrew names, though from the same root, are spelled differently in different parts of Scripture, Methuselah, the longest liver, carried *death* in his name. His name intimates the prophetic spirit of his father Enoch. *He dieth, and water is sent forth*. And Methuselah, it is supposed, died the very year in which the Flood came.

The last name in our line is that of Noah. Noah was destined to connect, or hinge together, two worlds. Noah, like Enoch, walked with God. But, in his days, the wickedness of man was great upon the earth; so great, that it grieved God that he had made man. He determined therefore to destroy him. 'The time of God's pa-

tience and forbearance toward provoking sinners is sometimes long, but always limited; reprieves are not pardons; though God bear a great while, he will not bear always.' Noah built the ark of the incorruptible gopher wood. It was five hundred feet long, and upwards. For a hundred and twenty years, after the threatening, was Noah preaching and building. The going on in building the ark was in itself a continued sermon. The daily sounds of the hammer were loud words. But they repented not. They mocked. The Flood came. The ark rode. It had no rudder. The angels guided it. The world was drowned. The ark rested on Ararat. And the covenant-bow spanned, and cheered the New Heavens and the New Earth.

As Adam was the father of the first, so was Noah the father of the second world. Noah's three sons separated, and colonized the new world; all probably then of one complexion, unless the curse upon Canaan altered his colour. Nimrod, the grandson of Ham, and Noah's great-grandson, that mighty hunter before the Lord, built Babylon, and the Tower of Babel, and also, as most think, Nineveh, very soon after the Flood. Noah himself lived three hundred and fifty years after the Deluge. But human life was soon shortened, first to a hundred and twenty years; and in process of time, to our brief and melancholy three-score years and ten.

Noah was a type of Christ. As it was in the days of Noë, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of Man. The world was once drowned. It is next to be burned. When that time comes, and the stars shall fall like a shower of fire, Christ will be the only Ark of Safety.

It has been said, that the Old Testament ends with a Curse, and the New Testament with a Blessing. Then, if the Old Testament is a Paradise Lost, the New Testament is a Paradise Regained.

#### REFLECTIONS.

1. The name of Adam being placed at the Head of the line of mankind, forever confutes, to all who believe



the Bible, the fabulous pretences of some nations to a race of people, who are said to have lived before Adam, called Præ-Adamites.

2. It is remarkable, and no compliment to human pride, that the history of *above sixteen hundred and fifty years*, even from Adam to the Flood; and which is compressed, and crowded, into the half a dozen chapters of Genesis, as we said; is the only true record in the world of the Antediluvian Ages. Such is Human Fame. And such is the inestimable value of these authentic sketches of the first historian, Moses.

3. As no one of these men died much short of eight hundred years old, and many of them lived longer than that term; and as all these patriarchs, except Noah, were born before Adam died; they, as we before intimated, might easily, and probably did, receive from his venerable lips, before he left the earth, the account of the Creation, which he had received, either from God himself, or an angel of God. Also of Eden, of the Fall, the promise, and the precepts of piety. These were thence transmitted down from one to another. And after Adam's death, they could be corrected by Methuselah, who had lived, and talked with Adam; and thus would they be naturally received and treasured up, as divine oracles, by Noah. And from Noah they could be, and doubtless were, dispersed out of the Ark, over the second world; and then, after a period of above eight hundred years from the Deluge, collected, and recorded, by the learned and inspired Moses. Thus doth God preserve the history of his Church.

4. We may assign some natural causes for the antediluvian longevity; such as the more healthful air, the more benign influence of the heavenly bodies, the comparatively paradisiacal state of the earth, and perhaps the superior medicinal knowledge of the plants. Yet, after all, the principal cause must be resolved into the preserving will and providence of God; in order thereby more speedily to populate the earth, and to promote the memory of religion.

5. We perceive that very small beginnings may produce very great and important ends, by the power and

blessing of God. And as all mankind, from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Christ, and from Christ to Ourselves, are of one family, and therefore but brothers and sisters, more or less remotely related; we should feel that relationship in every person we meet, whether rich or poor, a foreigner or a native, and even whether virtuous or vicious; and strive to do good to each other, and ever to counsel, and sympathise with, and relieve each other, in the bonds of a kindred fellowship.

6. The translation of Enoch conspicuously showed the goodness of God. It was a reward for eminent piety, preserved in the midst of an ungodly world. It was an evidence of a future state. It foreshowed the resurrection of the body. It was a living sign to the patriarchal age. Adam, who talked with God, was dead. Noah, who was hereafter to converse with God, was not yet born. In the middle age, between these two, Enoch was taken to heaven by a miracle. And the subject, and the instruction conveyed, were worthy of a miracle.

7. Pious persons have no cause to regret an early removal from this world of sin. Abel and Enoch, the two most favoured of the antediluvian believers, were sooner taken from earth to heaven, than any others, whose names are left recorded.

8. If all mankind, of all ages, of all nations, of all languages, and of all complexions, have sprung, as it is revealed, from one common Father; how inconsistent, how cruel, how degrading to our species, and how worthy of all condemnation, both human and divine, are War and Slavery.

9. Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. Though long delayed, the time came at last, the sentence was executed. Though the Antediluvians lived so long, they finally died. Not one escaped. In all their glory, in all their goodness, in all their wickedness, in all their ambition, both the heads and the branches, the fathers and the families, went down into the dust of Adam. Whether they lived a thousand, or a hundred years, is now nothing to them. They have made up their account. And we must soon make up ours. Such is the vanity of human life, even in its best, and longest existence. And such is

the importance of living that life well. If life be full of sorrow and sin, it is a blessing that our days are shortened, that we may the sooner prepare to enter into that rest, which remaineth for the people of God. For though man dies, God lives.

10. The Names alone remain. Such is the whole history, and often more than the whole history, of man. Man is born, bequeathes his own likeness, and dies. Millions on millions have died, and are daily dying, without so much as leaving behind them even a bare name, that they once lived. But, if they were good men, although their names be blotted out on earth, they will be found written on the white adamantine stone in heaven.

11. We have reason to believe that, in the World before the Flood, when men lived so long, and there were giants in the earth, there were many renowned men, and great achievements; and towns built, and battles fought; and vineyards planted, and arts invented, and cattle increased; but the particulars of these are all lost and buried in the flood of oblivion. This should remind us of the perishable tenure of men's doings; and lead our thoughts to that second destruction of human hopes, when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll.

12. Lastly, As we are all descended from that one man Adam, by whom sin and death entered into the world, we should be sensible of our vileness and frailty; and strive to be habitually ready for the stroke of that sweeping scythe, which, in its swathe, cuts down both the dry stalk, and the green blade; and will so soon lay us all, side by side, upon the plain. And as all the innumerable myriads of men, which have peopled, and shall people the earth, through all past and passing generations, will ere long be summoned to the judgment seat of Christ; may we so walk faithful through this thorny wilderness, the *Paradise Lost* of the first Adam; that we may at death be ushered welcome into the *Paradise Regained* of the second Adam, who is the Lord from Heaven.

## SAINT JUDE'S EPISTLE.

### SERMON XLIV.

*St Jude*, i. 3. — EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH,  
WHICH WAS ONCE DELIVERED UNTO THE SAINTS.

SAINT JUDE, the Apostle, surnamed Thaddeus, and Lebbeus, or the Zealot, *Zelotes*, was the son of Alpheus, and brother to Saint James the Less, bishop of Jerusalem ; and likewise to Joses and Symeon. Saint Jude therefore was also a brother, or cousin-german, to our Lord. *Jude*, and *Judas*, and *Judah*, are the same name, differently spelled. Saint Jude then, it seems, had a good namesake, the patriarch Judah, out of whose loins came lineally the Messiah; and a bad namesake, Judas of Carriot or Kerioth, his contemporary in the Apostleship, and the traitor to the Messiah. But the same names may be common to the best, and the worst persons. Saint Jude is supposed to have been originally a husbandman. He was married, and had children ; for two of his grandsons are mentioned as martyrs. Saint Jude is said by some to have suffered martyrdom, by being shot to death with arrows, near mount Ararat, in Armenia ; but the most probable account is, that he died a peaceable, natural death, at Berytus, in Syria, at a good old age.

There is no particular record of the time and manner, in which Saint Jude became a disciple of our Lord. None of the Evangelists have said any thing of Saint Jude, after he became an apostle, except Saint John ; and that is the mention of one unimportant question, which he asked our Lord, at the last supper. Saint Jude was one of those, to whom Jesus appeared, at different times, after his resurrection. He was also one of the

hundred and twenty, upon whom the Holy Spirit descended, in the visible shape of flames of fire, like cloven tongues, which rested on their heads, on the memorable day of Pentecost. Saint Jude, like the prophet Obadiah, wrote only *One Chapter*. But even this is more than can be said of more than half of the Apostles, who wrote nothing at all. They were preachers, not writers. As Saint Jude wrote but little, perhaps, though not much is said about it, he preached and laboured the more. Probably, he went on missions, and wrought miracles, in different countries. This Epistle is supposed to have been written in the latter part of the apostolical age, and not long before the death of Saint Jude. It is placed last in order of the Apostolic Epistles in the New Testament.

For a time, some hesitation as to the authenticity of this Epistle prevailed; but now, both from the internal evidence, and the general current of antiquity, the book of Jude is conceded to be canonical. The Epistle was doubted, because Saint Jude is thought to have quoted Apocryphal books; to wit, the book called the *Assumption of Moses*; and the book called the *Prophecy of Enoch*. But Saint Paul quoted from the Heathen poets; to wit, from Epimenides, Aratus, and even from the iambs of the comic Menander. He adduced what was true in them to good purpose, without at all sanctioning the fables they contained. The first uncanonical allusion of Saint Jude relates to Saint Michael, the Archangel. As Michael was the head of all the angelic orders, so Satan was the head of all the diabolic orders. It is supposed, that these two chiefs, who, with their angels, fight against each other, disputed about the restoration of the Jewish Church. The other allusion is to the patriarch Enoch. The prophecy of Enoch to the Antediluvians was not committed to writing by Moses, but is preserved only by tradition. If Enoch was so good, as to be translated without death to heaven, there is little doubt that he prophesied. In this prophecy, even so soon after the Creation, Enoch foresaw the coming of our Lord to Judgment.

But Saint Jude, even in his *one little chapter*, has another difficulty to overcome. He is charged with being

a plagiarist from Saint Peter. It is true, that there is a great similarity, both of sentiment and phraseology, between the epistle of Saint Jude, and the *second chapter* of the *second epistle* of Saint Peter. Some think, that Peter and Jude both quoted from some Ancient Book, or Records, now lost. It is more likely, however, that as Saint Jude wrote upon the same topic, and against the same men whom Peter had opposed ; in order to give more effect to his own, he adopted and imitated many of Saint Peter's thoughts and expressions.

The short Circular Letter of Saint Jude is strictly Catholic, or General ; being addressed, not to one particular Church, but to all Christians throughout the world. It contains a Salutation, an Exhortation, and a Doxology. Its warning Title is, *Contend earnestly for the Faith, and Beware of False Teachers*. Particularly, and circumstantially, 'he contends against the false teachers; the Gnostics, Nicolaitans, and Simonians; who corrupted the doctrine, and disturbed the peace of the Church.' These men had glided into the infant church, like serpents. The danger of listening to these men, is argued from the tremendous judgments of God brought upon the old sinners, in the first ages. The whole Epistle is designed to warn against abductors, and their abductions ; and to inspire a love to truth and holiness. It likewise teaches, how to act towards the erroneous, and the scandalous. Though it was not immediately addressed to any one person, or family, or church ; but to the universal society of new converts, whether from Judaism, or Paganism ; it will be of general use to all Christians, to the end of time. The style of Saint Jude is manly and nervous. His description of the false teachers is bold, happy, and energetic; the exhortation and apostolic farewell are both forcible and affectionate; and the doxology is peculiarly reverential and sublime.

We will now proceed with an explanatory *Paraphrase of the Epistle*.

## THE PARAPHRASE.

He begins with a Salutation. Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ — he might have claimed kindred to his Lord according to the flesh, but he waives that, and rather glories in being his servant; and brother of James — James is mentioned, because he was an eminent person in the church; to them that are sanctified by God the Father — separated from the idolatrous world, and consecrated by faith to the true God; and preserved in Jesus Christ — from the corrupt practices of idolaters, and the errors of false teachers; preserved from the gates of hell, to the glory of heaven; and called — called out from the world, from vanity to seriousness, from uncleanness to holiness; unto you, may mercy — for the best need mercy; and peace — peace with God, and your own consciences; and love — both to and from God, and to and from man; be increased and abound.

He then, having heard of the pernicious doctrines beginning to prevail, hastens to remind them of the salvation, common for both Jews and Gentiles; and to exhort them earnestly to contend for the faith, which was once delivered to the saints; to the holy prophets and apostles, and by them published to the world. For this faith, he exhorts them to contend, not furiously, but earnestly. To be open and bold in their profession, especially in times of notorious opposition. Not to contend for the discriminating badges of this or that sect; nor for any thing of later date than the inspired writings of the apostles and evangelists; but for that, which is really the Christian faith. And this is the reason of his exhortation. For, says he, there are certain men crept into the church unawares, under specious pretences; who were before of old ordained to a condemnation, similar to that about to be mentioned. Ungodly men; such as 'raise scruples, start questions, cause divisions, widen breaches, merely to advance or promote their own selfish, ambitious, or covetous ends. This has been the plague of the church in all ages.' Lascivious men; taking encouragement to sin more boldly, because the grace of God had often so wonderfully

abounded; pretending that God was so good, he would not punish sinners. And infidel men; denying not only all revealed, but also all natural religion.

Saint Jude then warns the christian converts of the danger to those who wavered, or did not stand steadfast in the faith; and for this purpose, he puts them in remembrance, though they once knew this, of certain special judgments upon apostates. He first refers them to the Israelites, who were led out of the land of Egypt by a series of amazing miracles, and yet were left to perish by thousands in the Wilderness, by reason of unbelief. He then alludes to the angels, who kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation. These angels were not pleased with the station, which the Supreme Monarch had assigned for them; but thought, like discontented men in our age, that they deserved a better. Thus pride was the immediate cause of their fall. These angels must have been in a state of probation, capable of standing or falling, as Adam was in Paradise. Thus they are reserved under darkness, unto the judgment of the Great Day. He next points them to the Cities of the Plain, Sodom, Gomorrha, Admah, and Zeboim, which are now covered by the Dead Sea. For going after strange flesh, the wicked inhabitants were set forth for an example, suffering, the cities literally, and the people figuratively, the vengeance of eternal fire. There was but one little Zoar spared, at the prayer of righteous Lot, for a refuge to him, and his family. Others must take heed, therefore, not to imitate their sins, lest the like plagues overtake them.

Saint Jude then reverts to the false teachers, and calls them filthy dreamers. They are as disobedient as the Israelites, rebellious as the fallen angels, and impure as the Sodomites. Being cast into a deep sleep of intoxication, through sin, they not only defile the flesh, but they despise dominion, are of a disturbed, seditious spirit, despising all law, and wishing to live as they list; and they speak evil of dignities, treating governors and government with contempt, and ridiculing all civil and divine institutions. Yet Michael the archangel, he says, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of



Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. Some suppose, that Satan wished to find the body of Moses, which the Lord had buried, that the Jews might worship it. Others think, that by the body of Moses is meant the Jewish church, as the christian church is called the body of Christ. Yet even Michael did not think a good cause needed any such weapon as a railing accusation, to be employed in its defence. 'A memorandum to all disputants never to bring railing accusations into their disputes. Truth needs no supports from falsehood, or scurrility.' Like Michael, we should leave it to the Lord to rebuke the railer. But these dreamers, these false teachers, he says, speak evil of those things which they know not; namely, the origin and utility of civil government, that which even protects their own persons and property. How many, both things and persons, had never suffered by slanderous tongues, if they had been better known. But what they know naturally, as brute beasts, by mere natural instinct, they abuse; being slaves to their animal propensities, like the irrational brutes. They violate the dictates even of natural religion. The fault is not in their understanding, but in their depraved wills, and disordered affections, which they choose rather to gratify, than to mortify.

Saint Jude then breaks out into a *Wo unto them!* for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Corè. Like Cain, they are atheistical and profane, haters of their brethren, and slayers of the souls of men. Like Balaam the son of Bosor, who sought to favour Balak, being greedy of present worldly honours, they pervert the word of God, refine away its meaning to suit the inclinations of men, and make a gain of godliness. And like Corah, who opposed Moses as priest, and Aaron as prince, so they oppose the authority of the Apostles of our Lord, and run into presumptions, in which they must assuredly perish as he did. Like Cain, and Balaam, and Korah of old, they are guilty of murder, covetousness, and rebellion, and must expect a like wo to follow them.

Again he goes on to denounce the false teachers, in a highly figurative style. He calls them spots in their

feasts of charity, or love-feasts, so much spoken of by the ancient church. These Love-Feasts were in use in the primitive church, until the middle of the fourth century. At first, they were held immediately *before* the Lord's Supper ; but in time, immediately *after* it. At these feasts, the rich members entertained the poor members, the widows, orphans, and strangers ; and all sat down and ate together, in token of a united love. But these hypocritical professors were spots or blemishes upon these feasts, eating and drinking as gluttons and wine-bibbers, without a holy fear and gratitude. He calls them clouds without water, carried about of winds. Formal professors, without active zeal, like clouds, which in a time of drought promise rain, but perform nothing of what they promise ; and also ungrounded professors, who being light and empty, and easily carried about, this way or that, as the wind of their passions happens to set, may become a ready prey to each new doctrine. He calls them trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, planted in the Lord's vineyard, yet fruitless ; men, who begin in the spirit, and end in the flesh ; twice dead, once in the Jewish, and once in the christian vineyard ; once before they professed, and once since, by a relapse into their former sins ; plucked up by the roots, rooted out on that account, so that there is no more hope of them ; now cumbering the ground, and reserved only for the fire. He calls them raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame ; boisterous, noisy, full of talk and turbulency, with but little sense or meaning ; creating much uneasiness to men of better sense, and calmer tempers, and which will in the end but foam out their own greater shame. Lastly, he calls them wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. He does not compare them to the regular and fixed planets, which enlighten their own steady course ; but to those baleful and erratic meteors, which lead simple souls astray, by their strange and bewildering gleamings. Like these meteors, these teachers are sometimes *here*, and sometimes *there*, so that one knows not, even with much ado, how or where to find or fix them ; but to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever. If this will not make those ministers, who

corrupt the word of God, and mislead the souls of mankind, tremble, I know not what will.

Saint Jude then brings forward the prophecy of the patriarch Enoch. And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed ; and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him, as if he were an impostor. Enoch is called the *seventh from Adam*, to distinguish him from the two other Enochs, one the son of wicked Cain, the other the son of pious Seth. This prophecy was handed down, not by revelation, but tradition. Thus our Lord's coming to Judgment was prophesied, as early as the middle of the Patriarchal Age.

Saint Jude now turns once more, and enlarges on the character of these evil teachers. They are not only murderers, whom neither God nor man can please, and who are never pleased with their own state ; and complainers against Providence, and the civil laws, walking after their own eyes, letting their vicious appetites be their only rule, and thus engendering ungovernable passions ; but they are also time-servers and flatterers, with their mouth speaking great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage ; pretending to be in admiration at the wisdom or beauty of the great and rich, hoping thereby to acquire money or influence.

But, beloved, Saint Jude now turns back to the christian converts, But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before by our Lord's Apostles. They predicted that, in the last time, in the conclusion of the Jewish polity, these mockers, these sensualists, who are the worst of separatists, because they separate themselves from every branch of the church of Christ, should come. So that your faith should not be shaken, but rather confirmed, by the fulfilment of their prophecy. Therefore, being forewarned, be ye also forearmed, against deceivers. But ye, beloved, build up yourselves in the most holy faith, pray in the divine spirit of prayer, keep yourselves in the love of God, and look to the mercy, not to your im-

perfect merits, but to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, for life eternal.

Saint Jude now, having given the converts his farewell advice respecting themselves, offers them his parting counsel, how to treat delinquents. He says, And of some have compassion, making a difference. Be compassionate towards those, who err through ignorance. Make a difference between the weak and the wilful. Reclaim the deluded by the gentle tone of persuasion. Restore the penitent in the spirit of meekness. Be not harsh or severe with such natures. If God has forgiven them, then why should not we? We need *his* forgiveness, more than they do *ours*. And others, he says, save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. To such as err through a perverse will, and corruption of heart, preach the terrors of the Lord; hold up the censures of the church, and a future judgment. Pull them out of the fire of sin and temptation, as you would snatch them out of a house on fire. But in so doing, shun all familiarity with them, hating even the garment spotted by the flesh. Avoid their contagious conversation, as you would a garment spotted by the infectious leprosy. Eschew all that leads to sin, or looks like sin.

Saint Jude now concludes with a sublime Doxology. And surely, whatever subject we have been labouring, it is fittest to end with ascribing glory to God. Let us therefore respond to Saint Jude. Now unto Him, who is able to keep us from falling from *the faith once delivered unto the saints*, and into the hands of false teachers, *who creep in unawares*; and to present us faultless — not as those who never sinned, but whose sins are pardoned — before the presence of his glory, now an object of faith, soon to be an object of sense; with exceeding joy, for where there is no sin, will be no sorrow; to the only wise God our Saviour, to Him who alone is wise underivedly, be ascribed the glory of infinite perfection, and the majesty of universal empire, both now and ever. Surely, the God who is as willing, as he is able, to do all this, is worthy of such a high Doxology. Let us then, with Saint Jude, affix to it our hearty, and reverential AMEN.

# THE MILLENNIUM.

## SERMON XLV.

**Rev. xi, 4. — AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST  
A THOUSAND YEARS.**

[Chiefly condensed from a Treatise upon the same subject.]

Who has not heard with delight of the thousand years, called the Millennium? The glorious thousand years, when Satan shall be bound in his den, and the saints shall rule on the earth? Millennial glory is the burden of prophetic song; it is one of the grand and leading objects of prediction, from Genesis to Revelation. To bring to view and enforce some of the most important instructions, which God has given us relating to the Millennium, is the object of these Sermons. The subject may be embraced under four inquiries.

- I. When will the Millennium commence?
- II. How long will be its duration?
- III. What will be the state of the world during the Millennium?
- IV. What duties are inculcated *upon us* by this subject?

### I. WHEN WILL THE MILLENNIUM COMMENCE?

There have been various conjectures and calculations upon this point. But the most common and most natural opinion is; that the Millennium will commence at about six thousand years after the creation of the world. As God was engaged six days in the work of creation, and rested on the seventh, and as he sanctified each seventh

day as a day of holy rest, or Sabbath ; so it has been supposed, that the church, after being in a state of labour and toil and distress for six thousand years, will find the seven thousandth a period of holy rest, of peace and glory. We read that, one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Accordingly, as the world stood about four thousand years before Christ, so it is supposed, that the Millennium will commence about the year of our Lord two thousand, that is, about one hundred and seventy years from this time. And do not the Signs of the Times proclaim even now that this blessed day is approaching ?

## II. HOW LONG WILL BE THE DURATION OF THE MILLENNIUM ?

Under this head, we shall also be very brief. The only question is, Whether the thousand years mentioned in the text are to be considered as literal, or prophetic years; and if prophetic, whether they represent a definite period, or one that is indefinite? Much ingenuity has been exercised upon this point by learned men. Some suppose that, considering the state of the world during the six thousand years *previous* to the Millennium, and the *little season* when Satan is again to be let loose *after* the Millennium, a literal thousand years for the saints to live and reign with Christ upon earth, even if all are saved who live at that time, will not answer the prediction of bruising the serpent's head by the Seed of the woman. They thus conclude, that the years are to be understood as prophetic, and to intimate a much longer period. But it is much more important that we should possess the temper of the Millennarians, and that we should exert ourselves to bring on the blessed day, than that we should know its duration.

## III. WHAT WILL BE THE STATE OF THE WORLD DURING THE MILLENNIUM ?

1. We may in general observe, that in the Millennium, *true religion will much more prevail, than before.* The world has lain in wickedness for near six thousand years. This was the case in the times before the flood;

it was the case in the days of the patriarchs, the prophets, and the apostles. It is the case now. But this dreadful state of irreligion will then have an end. The Serpent's head will then be crushed. Sing, O daughter of Zion; for lo I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the Lord of hosts; and many nations shall be joined unto the Lord in that day, and shall be my people.

2. *During the Millennium, idolatry will cease through the world.* Idolatry has constituted a principal feature in the picture of all nations, and all ages, since the flood. Even God's ancient people, to whom he was manifested in so many ways, and in a manner so glorious, were infected with idolatry. The two very first of the commandments from the top of Sinai were pointed against idolatry. It was for this sin, more than for any other, that they were finally carried captive, and scattered among nations. Multitudes of idols have been worshipped from ancient times to the present day. Heathen lands are still full of idols. The destruction of idolatry, therefore, will produce an amazing change in the world. Many passages of Scripture prove that the day is coming, when idolatry shall be extirpated from the earth. But one is sufficient for our present purpose. In that day, a man shall cast his idols of silver, and his idols of gold, which they have made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and to the bats; to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for the fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth. From this prophecy, we may conclude that, just before the Millennium, there will be tremendous judgments, and that the earth will be most terribly shaken.

3. *During the Millennium, the Jews will be converted to Christ.* The Saviour, while on earth, came unto his own, and his own received him not. The Jews were peculiarly his own, because he was a Jew, and because they had been God's covenant people for nearly two thousand years. But they received not Christ. Though thousands after thousands were miraculously fed by him; and though even his enemies were constrained to acknowledge, that never man spake like him, yet comparatively very few sincerely

received him into their hearts. There were his eleven disciples, his seventy others, a number of devout women, and a few more. But of the many thousands of Israel, who at one time and another attended his preaching and miracles, there is no reason to believe, that more than one thousand sincerely received him, while he remained on earth. After Christ rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven, his gospel was indeed preached with more success among the Jews. In a short time the church of Jerusalem amounted to four or five thousand. But still a very small part of the Jewish nation were converted to Christ. It is supposed that there are now upon earth seven or eight millions of Jews; and probably there are not so many as five hundred Christians among them all; not one among a thousand. But blessed be the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the house of Israel shall not always remain in such woful unbelief. The ancient promises of Jehovah to this stiff-necked and rebellious people will be accomplished; for faithful is he who hath promised. For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. The time is coming, when Jew and Gentile shall be one sheep-fold under Jesus Christ, the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

4. During the Millennium, *the church will be delivered from her external enemies*. Numerous, bitter, and dreadful have been the enemies of the church, from the beginning of her existence. The persecution of the good — the persecution of the good, on account of their goodness — has been almost coeval with the world. Almost from the beginning of time, they that have been born after the spirit have been persecuted by them who have been born after the flesh. Among the first-born of mankind, behold the hands of a brother are bathed in a brother's blood. And wherefore slew he him? Why did Cain slay his brother, his only brother, Abel? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Enoch too was probably persecuted. We know that the righteous soul of Lot was vexed from day to day. Joseph was



cruelly persecuted. The prophets were persecuted. The people of God were also sometimes greatly molested by heathen nations, who united to crush Israel, and destroy the church. Even when the Prince of Peace came into the world, he did not find it a place of peace for him. The enemies of the church did not cease, until they with wicked hands had slain the Lord of glory. The sword of persecution has been bathed in the blood of martyrs for a considerable part of the time, ever since there were Christians in the world to be persecuted. But blessed be the Father of mercies, these days of blood and horror must have an end; and if not already finishing, will soon be terminated. God declares to Zion, In righteousness shalt thou be established, and thou shalt be far from oppression, for thou shalt not fear; and from terror, for it shall not come near thee. Thus Christians shall be at peace, and dwell safely. Their grand adversary, that has taken the lead in every persecution since the foundation of the world, shall be cast out; he shall be confined during the whole Millennial period. This will appear with additional evidence under the next head.

5. During the Millennium, *war will be unknown*. The cessation of war will greatly distinguish the Millennial period from all others. A great part of the history of the world is a history of wars and fightings. Even before the flood, there were on the earth mighty men, men of renown, giants in wickedness, and giants in war. Nay, the earth was filled with violence. By war, the earth has been transformed into an Aceldama, a field of blood; into an amazing and horrid Golgotha, a place of skulls. Like Ezekiel's valley of vision, it has been full of dead men's bones. The Christian, with melting heart, lifts a supplicating voice to Heaven: How long, O thou God of peace, how long shall the sword devour? How long shall man be suffered to discharge his wrath and vengeance against his brother man? against his brother, who is of one flesh and blood with himself? O thou God of peace, scatter thou the people that delight in war. Such cries have been long ascending, like fragrant incense, before the mercy-seat, and have entered the ears of Him, that heareth prayer. An answer of peace is granted. 'The

Lord will give strength to his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth, he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.' The ultimate reference of this passage was doubtless to the Millennial day, when the meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace.

6. During the Millennium, *the saints will rule the earth*. This has never been the case, since men began to multiply upon the earth. It is doubtful, whether one twentieth part of the kings and rulers, mentioned in the Bible, were truly virtuous. The rest were evil, enemies to God, and enemies to mankind; men, adorned with the ensigns of royalty, but some of the greatest pests, and most dreadful plagues, that ever the wrath of God commissioned to scourge a wicked world. Even if we look at the kings of God's ancient people, favoured and distinguished as they were by various privileges; and pressed as they were by obligations the most weighty, solemn, and affecting; were they all good men, haters of covetousness, ruling their people in the fear of God? No, my brethren, they were *not* all good men. Most of them were far, very far indeed, from righteousness. There is no reason to think, that a quarter of them were righteous. Of the twenty kings that ruled over Judah, not more than four or five were good men. Of the nineteen kings of the Ten Tribes, not one of them has left the least evidence of having been a good man. And now, I would ask the impartial historian, what nation, that has been ruled by as many as forty-two kings, or half that number, has ever been favoured by so large a proportion of those that were pious? What a dark, and gloomy, and horrible picture does this present of the royal families of the earth. Surely none of their descendants can have much cause to boast his royal blood. But if through the telescope of prophecy, we take a view of future ages, the prospect brightens; and a picture of royalty is presented, as lovely as it is splendid. Here it may be remarked, that although we use the word *royalty* in accommodation to the language of Scripture; yet it is very conceivable, that the

word *kings*, as used in prophecy, may mean no more than presidents, governors, and other officers, exalted from time to time among the people. But though we do not know what will be the form of human government during the Millennium; yet we do know, that there will be human governments, and we know what will be the character of the rulers. They will all be good men; all the rulers will be saints. The Revelator observes, And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

7. During the Millennium, *the righteous will possess the earth*. Hitherto the righteous have possessed but a very small proportion of the earth, or of earthly goods. They have indeed been but a small part of mankind; so that, if they had been as wealthy as the wicked, they would have possessed but a small part of the earth. But it does not appear, that the righteous have generally been as wealthy as the wicked. There appears to be something in the possession of great worldly wealth, peculiarly unfavourable to embracing the religion of Jesus. It is natural for the poor to look up to the rich; it is no less natural perhaps for the rich to look down upon the poor. Now it is very hard for those who receive such homage and adulation, and thus look down upon others, to bow the knee, to bow the soul, to the meek and lowly Jesus, the humble and despised Galilean. But bow they must, or they cannot be Christians. If they will not ask, they cannot receive. Christ was poor; he had not where to lay his head. The apostles were poor; they knew what it was to suffer need. But I would by no means imply, that a rich man cannot be a good man. He is certainly under very peculiar obligations to be good. And notwithstanding all the temptations, with which they have been called to struggle, some rich men have been good men. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, those distinguished patriarchs and saints, they were rich; Joseph also, and Job, and Daniel, and Zaccheus, and Joseph of Arimathea, and others, were rich. But notwithstanding these noble examples, and others in later ages, there is reason to believe, that a vast proportion of the opulent have been

led to choose their portion in this world. But it will not be thus in the Millennium. The earth will then belong to the righteous. Thus if, according to the preceding proposition, the rulers are to be pious men, we may conclude, that a great proportion of the wealthy and honourable of the earth will also be pious. That the righteous shall possess the earth in the Millennium, is most clearly shown in many passages throughout the Bible. One must suffice. Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land forever.

8. During the Millennium, *the wicked will cease from the earth*. Hitherto the world has been exceedingly infested with evil-doers. Before the flood, almost all mankind were wicked. And since the flood, they have been very little better. In some respects, we fear they have become more wise to do evil, than their Antediluvian progenitors. But the earth will not be thus infested and polluted forever. Very many passages clearly prove that the earth shall be purged from the wicked. I have seen the wicked in great power, spreading himself like a green bay tree; yet he passed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found. Here the passing away of the mighty wicked, an event that was future, and then about three thousand years distant, is represented as past. And he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. This is manifestly introductory to the Millennium; for the prophet immediately proceeds to describe the peaceful and blessed state of that period. We are not to suppose, however, that all are to be thus cut off, who may be found opposed to Christ and his kingdom. We cannot but indulge the hope, that the Millennium will not be introduced principally by the destruction of the wicked; but that the greater part of the wicked will be converted, to usher in that glorious day. It is probable, from a wonderful prediction in Isaiah, that vast myriads of the Gentiles will be converted nearly at the same time. Thus the wicked will cease from the earth.

9. In the Millennium, *all shall know and serve the Lord*. To those who are sighing and crying for the

abominations of the world, this proposition may be more interesting than the other. Though the perfections of God are inscribed upon all things as with a sunbeam, and engraven as with the point of a diamond; yet how small a part of our race have known the Lord. But in the Millennium, men will not only believe, but know there is a God; and not only believe and know that God exists, but delight to serve and adore him. In time past, but a small proportion of those, who have known God speculatively, have sincerely obeyed and worshipped him. It is said of ancient heathen philosophers, When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful. This has doubtless been the case with myriads of mankind. But in the blessed period that is approaching, neither the theory nor the practice of atheism will have place on earth. Knowing the Lord, as the phrase is generally used in Scripture, implies knowing him with the understanding, with the heart, and in the life. That all shall know the Lord in these senses, is manifest from the propositions that have been already considered. If religion is to prevail much more than it ever has prevailed; if idolatry is to cease; if the Jews are all to become Christians; if Zion is to be delivered from her external enemies; if war is to cease; if the saints are to rule and inherit the earth; and especially if the wicked are all to cease from the earth; then surely all that remain upon the earth must be righteous; must know and serve the Lord, from the least unto the greatest. Of the numerous texts in proof of this proposition, we shall adduce but two Isaiah prophesies, 'For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the seas.' And the Saviour declares, And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw *all men* unto me.' But there is a passage in Revelation which appears decisive. 'But the rest of the dead lived not again, until the thousand years were finished.' The apostle is here speaking of the wicked dead, who should not live, or rise, till the end of the Millennium. This resurrection is doubtless a *spiritual* resurrection; wherein the wicked will live in their successors, in the same sense as Elijah lived in John the

Baptist. As then, the wicked are not to live till the end of the Millennium, there will be no wicked men upon earth ; and consequently all must be righteous, during that blessed period.

10. During the Millennium, *knowledge will be greatly increased.* Reason and scripture unite in confirming this proposition. There has been a vast increase of knowledge within a few centuries ; and as causes, in a great measure the same, are still in operation, we may conclude, that knowledge will greatly increase for centuries to come. From year to year, greater and greater numbers are engaged in the pursuit, and the ardour of each seems only to stimulate the efforts of the rest. One discovery leads to another ; this to a third, and so on. That wonderful art of all arts, the art of printing, records, disseminates, and forever preserves, every discovery and improvement, that is worthy of preservation. But, my brethren, all the light that reason can give upon this subject is as darkness, compared with the light of revelation. We are assured by Him, that cannot lie, that many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. The expulsion of the prince of darkness, and the regeneration of the world, will remove many obstacles, and furnish many and great facilities in the acquisition of knowledge. When wars shall cease to desolate ; when the Gothic foot shall no more trample upon the flowers of taste ; when vice and immorality shall cease ; when every kind of intemperance shall be cured ; when the earth shall be purged from tyranny and oppression ; when the darkness of superstition, the railing of bigotry, and the contracting, blinding influence of illiberality shall cease ; when not a single Pharisee shall be left to take away the key of knowledge, or shut up the kingdom of heaven ; when the temple of knowledge shall be open to all ; when all shall be disposed to enter it ; when each one shall delight to assist his fellow to the utmost : with what new and amazing progress will the human mind rush forward in the path of understanding. May we not expect that every cottage will be irradiated with science, as well as with religion ; and that every peasant will be able not only to

read the bible, but to, read the stars. But, more especially, will men make advances in the knowledge of God, of the bible, of their own souls, of things unseen and eternal. Though they will then have a strong thirst for every kind of useful information, they will have a peculiar relish for that which is spiritual and heavenly.

# THE MILLENNIUM.

## SERMON XLVI.

[SUBJECT CONTINUED.]

Rev. xx, 4.—AND THEY LIVED AND REIGNED WITH CHRIST  
A THOUSAND YEARS.

11. DURING the Millennium, *Christians will make much higher attainments in grace, than before.* From the beginning of the world, two things have been peculiarly grievous to the pious heart ; one, that the righteous have been so few ; the other, that these few have been so imperfect. Of all the saints in the Bible, there is scarcely any, of whom there is not also some sin recorded ; some sin, to deface the fair page of history, and proclaim to succeeding generations, Let him, that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall. And how often have saints, in later ages, pierced through their own souls, by departing from their covenant God. How often has Christ been wounded in the house of his friends. What multitudes have run well for a time, but afterwards left their first love ; become lukewarm, indifferent, cold in spiritual matters, and almost forgetful of their Creator, Redeemer, and Judge. But, my brethren, it shall not be forever thus. The time is coming, when the robes of salvation, with which Christians are clothed and adorned, will shine forth with more beauty, than ever has been seen in mortals. We have seen that, during the Millennium, Christians will greatly excel in knowledge. There is rea-



son to believe, that they will be still more distinguished by holiness. In that day, there shall be upon the bells of the horses, 'Holiness to the Lord.' The spirits of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, will live in those, who shall reign with Christ during the Millennium; as the spirit of Elias lived in the Baptist. Millennial Christians will have the hearts of martyrs, though they will not be called to suffer martyrdom; they will manifest such a zeal for God, that it will seem as though all the old martyrs had risen from the dead; had risen from the dead, more zealous than ever. It is not to be supposed, that Christians will be entirely free from sin, even in the happiest part of that happy period. But Millennials will not be such imperfect, mourning, melancholy Christians, as their predecessors. So far from it, they will be as kings and priests, reigning and offering incense, before God.

12. In the Millennium, *people will enjoy much better health, than before.* How numerous, how various, how dreadful, are the diseases, which have disheartened, afflicted and tormented mankind for so many ages. We can scarcely find such an object as a person of adult years, who does not know, by sad experience, what it is to be sick. You will scarcely find, I do not say a city, you will scarcely find a village, where all the inhabitants are in health for a single hour. How many are languishing and drooping for a great part of their lives. Notwithstanding the astonishing improvements, which have been made in the science of anatomy, and the art of healing; the arts of luxury and vice, the horrid arts of producing fevers, consumptions, and almost all kinds of disease, have advanced with a progress nearly or quite equal, and perhaps even superior. It is probable, there is as great a proportion of sickness among mankind now, as there was in the days of Vesalius, Galen or Hippocrates; of David, Moses, or Abraham. But in the days of the Millennium, sickness will be greatly diminished, or wholly unknown. No disease will be then produced by intemperance, nor imprudence, the two causes, that have produced more sickness than perhaps all others. The art of healing and preventing diseases will no doubt be greatly improved.

And not only so, but it is probable, that after a course of ages, the very constitution of man will be improved and renovated, by the practice of virtue, the skill of man, and the blessing of God ; as it has been impaired by the practice of vice, and the judgments of heaven. The Sun of Righteousness shall rise with *healing* in his wings. And the prediction of Isaiah, evidently referring to the Millennium, will be fulfilled : And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick.

13. During the Millennium, there is reason to believe, *that people will live much longer, than men have lived since the days of Moses.* The causes, that prevent diseases and promote health, will tend to prolong life. If the human constitution is to be improved, this also will tend to lengthen out the days of man. As it was probably owing to the curse of God, as well as to natural causes, that the life of man was shortened ; so it is probable, that by the blessing of God, as well as by natural causes, the life of man will be lengthened. What man is he that desireth life, and loveth many days, that he may see good ? Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. The fear of the Lord prolongeth days, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.

14. In the Millennium, *Christians will be much more numerous, than before.* Hitherto the flock of Christ has been a little flock ; his people have been but a remnant. In but a small part of the inhabited world, has the true religion been known ; and comparatively but few in that small part have been found in the strait and narrow way. Many besides Elijah have felt, that they were almost alone in their pilgrimage. My brethren, it will not be always thus. The time is approaching, when the proportion of saints and sinners will be reversed ; and of all the nations and tribes and families of the earth, a remnant only shall be left to Satan. And that time will be only introductory to the Millennium ; it will be only the twilight of the glorious day. For when all shall know and serve the Lord, not even a remnant shall be left to the expelled and imprisoned adversary. There is also reason to believe, that the population of the world will be

vastly increased. How rapidly will population advance, when very few, probably, if any, shall die in infancy, childhood, or youth; particularly when 'God shall bestow the special blessing, by which he has promised to distinguish his people, when they shall return unto him. I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth. And again, In multiplying, I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand which is upon the seashore. But how can the earth support such amazing numbers? An answer to this question will be attempted in the next proposition.

15. During the Millennium, *the fruits of the earth will be much more abundant, than before.* A much greater portion of the earth's surface will probably then be cultivated, than at any time before. It is supposed, that about a million acres of land remain uncultivated in the ancient and populous island of Great Britain. What vast tracts then must we suppose are lying waste, in other countries of much greater extent; especially in those, that are comparatively new and thinly inhabited. There is reason to believe, that the whole habitable earth will be cultivated with much more care than China has received, and with ten times the skill. Rulers and subjects, philosophers, chemists and cultivators, seem to be uniting their efforts in various countries, for the advancement of agriculture. May we not expect, from these considerations, that the time will come, when the fruits of the earth will be increased a hundred fold? But to the Christian, there are other reasons to justify the expectation of an increase greater still. Ever since the fall of man, the earth has been under a curse. The ground was a second time cursed for the murderous conduct of Cain. And since the days of Adam and Cain, how often has the earth been cursed, in one part and another, for the wickedness of man. So that now the earth may be considered as lying under an accumulation of curses, like mountains piled upon mountains. It will be far otherwise in the Millennium. Then no doubt the curse will be almost or altogether removed; and the earth, by the abundant blessing of God, converted into one vast Eden, will bring forth by handfuls. In the bold language of Scripture, There shall

be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains, and the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon. What then shall we think of it, when such fruitfulness is represented as being upon the top of the mountains, the most unproductive parts of the earth? Thus, except *one small spot*, which, according to the prediction of Isaiah, is to remain under a tremendous and perpetual curse, for *the controversy of Zion*; perhaps to show succeeding generations how much the Lord abhors the haters of Zion; the rest of the earth will probably be so cultivated, and so blessed, that its productions will be increased a thousand fold.

16. During the Millennium, *Christians will be much better united, than before.* The flock of Christ has not only been a little flock, but the members of this little flock have often been grievously divided among themselves. As early as the days of the apostles, they began to divide into different sects, and to arrange themselves under different leaders. One was of Paul, another of Apollos, another of Cephas, and another, with perhaps an equal degree of sectarian spirit, professed to be more particularly of Christ. And since the days of the apostles, the denominations of Christians have been exceedingly multiplied, and even the members of the same sect have had very different opinions concerning important doctrines and practices. These divisions have been the cause of coldness, disaffection, wrath, strife, bitterness, slander, persecution, and almost every evil work. Some have been so affected with these things, as almost to despair of union among the members of Christ's body, in the present world. To such, it may be said, O ye of little faith, wherefore do ye doubt? Are we not assured, that the meek shall inherit the earth, and delight themselves in the abundance of peace? Yes, my brethren, there will be *abundance* of peace, all kinds of peace. They will enjoy peace of conscience, peace with God, and peace among themselves. Ephraim shall not envy Judah, nor Judah vex Ephraim. Differences in opinion will be constantly diminishing. As they become more and more united in sentiment, their practices will become more and more similar. We may therefore with confidence anticipate the time, not only

when all mankind shall be Christians, but when all Christians shall be of *one* and the *same denomination*.

17. In the Millennium, *the souls of the martyrs of preceding ages will live and reign with Christ upon earth*. And I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The question may arise, Will Christ reign on earth personally, or only spiritually; visibly, or invisibly? That his reign on earth during the Millennium will be spiritual, in the hearts of his people, and not personal or external, seems capable of satisfactory proof. We have already seen, that the resurrection of the martyrs and distinguished saints at the beginning of the Millennium, which is called the *first resurrection*, is to be merely spiritual, or a resurrection of souls, not of bodies. John did not see the bodies of them that were beheaded, but only their souls. As the first resurrection, therefore, is to be merely spiritual, and as the martyrs will be only spiritually raised to reign with Christ, it seems most rational to conclude, that the reign of Christ on earth will be merely spiritual. But what are we to understand by the saints reigning with Christ during the Millennium? No doubt it implies, that the hearts of the saints will be so completely conformed to the will of Christ, that they will cordially approve all his laws and dispensations, and exceedingly rejoice in them; that the saints will be eminently honoured and blessed; and that they will be workers together with Christ in the administration of his affairs, in a manner more striking and interesting, than in preceding ages.

18. In the Millennium, *Zion will appear exceedingly beautiful and glorious*. Zion has often been covered with a cloud, and the beauty of Israel cast down to the ground. Long has the church been travelling in the wilderness, clothed in sackcloth, with dust and ashes upon her head, and often with her garments rent. But behold, she is coming up from the wilderness, leaning on her beloved, her almighty Maker, Friend and Husband. The time is coming, my brethren, when the church will look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun; beautiful as Tirzah, and comely as Jerusalem. The King's

daughter shall then be all-glorious within, and appear all-glorious without ; her clothing shall be of wrought gold ; she shall be brought to the King in raiment of needlework. He shall greatly desire her beauty, and exceedingly rejoice in her love.

19. During the Millennium, *the earth will be filled with the glory of God.* In one sense indeed, the earth is now filled with the glory of God. It contains numberless displays of his power, wisdom and goodness. But then, it will be filled with displays of his power, wisdom and goodness, much more rich, abundant and striking. The wickedness of mankind, and the curse of God, under which the world shall have been groaning for thousands of years, will then be removed. Seasons and climates, winds and waves, will probably exhibit a milder and more delightful aspect. The rich luxuriance of the fruits of the earth will exhale a more glorious cloud of incense to the God of nature. The beasts of the field and the fowls of the air, instead of devouring each other, will dwell peacefully together, and seem to unite in harmonious anthems of praise to the God of peace. But these will be faint glories, compared with others more illustrious, with which the earth will be filled during the Millennium. It will be filled with moral agents, perhaps a thousand times as many as its present inhabitants. These will be greatly distinguished above all preceding generations, for the powers of their minds, for their attainments in knowledge, in understanding, in prudence, in refinement, in every intellectual and social excellence ; but especially for their zeal for the Lord of Hosts, for their glowing and rational devotion, for their fervent charity among themselves. And they will be distinguished for good works, no less than for zeal, charity and devotion. And the myriads of holy beings that shall then people the earth, will have eyes to see, and hearts to admire, the glory of God, in every dew-drop, in every opening bud, and more especially, in every singing, shouting, exulting Christian. Then may it, with most striking propriety, be said by Jehovah, This people have I formed for myself ; they shall show forth my praise.

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20. During the Millennium, *Christians will be much happier, than before.* Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, and her sin pardoned. How great, how unspeakable, will be the enjoyment of Christians, when pure and undefiled religion shall be so extensively, so universally triumphant ; when all the dark places of the earth shall be enlightened and cheered by an immortal Sun ; when the persecutor's sword shall cease to reek with human blood ; when the tongue of slander shall be silenced, and the land no longer mourn by reason of lying, and swearing, and stealing, and cheating, and wrath, and strife, and bitterness ; when disease and pain shall scarcely be known upon earth ; and when the whole world shall swarm with Christians, with Christians glowing with the spirit of the martyrs. Happy, thrice happy sons of Millennial glory, with what tender compassion will you look back upon us, who, though we have so much reason to be thankful for the light and privileges we enjoy, yet, compared with you, are still groping in the dark, and grovelling in the dust. Sing, O ye heavens ; shout, ye lower parts of the earth ; break forth into singing ; for the Lord hath done it.

#### IV. WHAT DUTIES ARE INCULCATED UPON US BY THIS SUBJECT ?

Having considered when the Millennium will commence ; how long will be its duration ; and what will be the state of the world during its continuance ; by far the most important inquiry, as respects ourselves, yet remains to be considered. It is this. What are these things to us ? Are they designed as mere speculations to amuse curiosity ? Or are they addressed to conscience, with a most solemn commission to engage our hearts and hands ? This leads to the fourth general inquiry, What duties are inculcated by the subject of the Millennium ?

My Brethren, are we not called upon, with a voice from the Prophecies, loud and clear, to attend to the *Signs of the Times* ? Do they not even *now* strongly indicate the preparing of the way for the *latter-day glory* ? If it is important for the statesman to observe the signs of the

times in relation to the kingdoms of this world ; how much more important must it be for those, who are waiting for the consolation of Israel, to consider the signs of the times, as they relate to the kingdom of heaven.

But the subject calls for something more than mere inquiries. The great end of knowledge is action. If this knowledge does not excite us to be up and doing for the advancement of Christ's kingdom, we may as well be without it. Nay, to us it will be worse than in vain ; for to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin. If the word and providence of God are unitedly proclaiming, Behold the Bridegroom cometh ; surely we are bound to prepare for his reception, and to go out, and bring him on his way.

But, do you ask, what is to be done ? What can *we* do for the promotion of an object so great, so glorious, and so desirable ? I answer, *much* ; there is much to be done, and there is much for *us* to do. The glorious Millennial period is to be introduced by *means*. God works by means. Not only do two petitions of our Lord's Prayer teach us to *pray* for this reign of the Saints every day ; but we are required to *act*. The amazing events, that will usher in the Millennium, will be principally effected by human instrumentality. Behold the stupendous wheels of Divine Providence already in motion, the wheels within wheels, urged forward by the hand of Omnipotence, and rolling forward to the blessed consummation. Though the Spirit of God must move the wheels, yet he makes use of human agents at every turn. To assist in urging forward these wheels, we are not only allowed, but required, to apply our hearts, our tongues, our counsels, our property, our influence, our prayers, our talents, our utmost exertions, our every effort, to the blessed work.

This subject addresses itself in particular to Ministers of the Gospel. Ye heralds of salvation, thank God and take courage. You are honoured with an agency in the work of salvation, and in introducing the Millennium, above men of any other profession, and probably above the Angels themselves. Then, cry aloud, and spare not. Prepare the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight. But this subject is also addressed to others, in every sta-



tion in life ; to all Christians, of every denomination ; to Parents, to Teachers, to Magistrates, to the Affluent, to the Young. There is not one, who has not something to do, to bring on this glorious day. Some may imagine, that they have no time, no means, to engage in this work ; that they have so much to do for themselves, their families, and fellow men, that they have no time to spare for this purpose. My dear brethren, Is the kingdom of Christ then nothing to you ? Is death, judgment, eternity, nothing to you, to your family ; nothing to your fellow men ? Be not deceived. The Judge standeth at the door ; and all the felicities of the upper world are depending — are depending perhaps upon the exertions of a single day. But, blessed be God, we believe that Christians *are* alive and stirring in this great work. We believe that more has been done, for the last twenty-five years, to forward the Millennial glory, than has been done for many centuries before. We believe that more is now doing, than ever yet has been done. This is emphatically the Age of Bibles, of Missionaries, of Prayer, of Sabbath Schools, of Benevolent Institutions. Go on, then, ye Vicegerents of God upon earth ; cease not ; faint not ; for verily ye shall in no wise lose your reward.

And now, my brethren, let us pause a moment, and reflect. We have been hearing of the happy times of the approaching Millennium. If such is to be the bliss and glory of the earthly Millennium, what is Heaven ? Compared with the light of Heaven, even the meridian effulgence of the Millennial day will be as darkness. Compared with the glory of Heaven, the Millennium itself will have no glory, by reason of the glory, that so greatly excelleth. Dearly beloved, let us give all diligence, to make our calling and election sure, and let us most fervently and constantly strive to enter into that glorious and eternal rest, that remaineth to the people of God.

# LOTS IN LIFE.

## SERMON XLVII.

*Eccles. vii, 25.* — I APPLIED MINE HEART TO KNOW — THE  
REASON OF THINGS.

WHEN we look at the different Lots in Life ; at the different degrees of bodily and of mental resource, of wealth and of reason, allotted to humanity ; we are naturally, and very properly, induced to apply our hearts to search out the reason of these things. In endeavouring to render a reason, which may be admonitory to the proud, and consolatory to the humble, I have thought it might be profitable to transfer, and apply, some opposite but parallel sketches of man, and of life, as they stand in strong relief, and may be daily seen, and contrasted, and pondered upon, in the majestic, but unequal ‘COURSE OF TIME.’

As in our holy faith, so in the ways of Providence, are many things mysterious. They are mysterious, not because Jehovah, or religion wishes to conceal them ; for the Christian faith, and the order of Providence, are both frank, standing forth to view, and inviting all to prove, and search, and investigate ; and yielding themselves a light to see them by. But they are mysterious, because they are too large for the human eye, too long for the human arm, to measure.

1. One feature in the ways of God, that seems wonderful, and at which some men complain, is the unequal gift of worldly things. Indeed, there is a great difference in men, externally, from the beggar to the prince. Take one of the highest, and one of the lowest, and conceive the scale between them.

Here is a noble of the earth, who dwells in a splendid mansion. He is robed in silk and gold ; and every day fares sumptuously. He is titled, honoured, and served, by thousands, who await his nod, and receive his will for law. Whole provinces attend his march, and draw his chariot, or bear the precious man aloft on their shoulders. Abased millions fall prostrate at his feet, and millions more thunder praises of adoration. As far as the eye can reach, he calls the land his own, and adds yearly to his fields. Like a tree of healthy root, he towers, and spreads his ample shade over half a nation. The air, the earth, and the sea, even all nature, the brute and the rational, minister to please him ; and, watching the rising of his thoughts, vie among themselves who shall most anticipate his desires. His palace rises and seems to kiss the gorgeous clouds. Streams bend their music to his will, and the native waste puts on luxuriant robes ; and plains of happy cottages cast out their tenants, and become his hunting field. Before him, the distant isles bow with their fruits, and rare spices. The South brings her treasures ; the East and West send theirs ; and the frigid North comes with her offering of glossy furs. Musicians soothe his ear with select airs ; beauty holds out her arms to him ; and every man of cunning skill and curious device, and endless multitudes of servants in livery, wait his pleasure with obsequious looks. And when the wants of nature are supplied, and all common-place extravagancies are more than filled ; and when caprice itself, in all its irregular appetites, is gorged to the full ; he plans new wants, and new expenses. Nor does he plan alone. Wise, learned, and sober men, of deep meditation, take up his case, and plan for him new modes of wild folly ; and contrive new wishes and wants, and wonderful means of spending with despatch. Yet, after all his spending, his fields extend, and his riches still grow, and what seems his infinite splendour still increases. So lavishly does Providence shower his daily bounty upon a single man.

Turn now thine eye, and look on Poverty. Look on the lowest of her ragged sons. We find him by the way, sitting in dust. He has no bread to eat, no tongue to ask, no limbs to walk, no home, no house, no friend. Ob-

serve his hollow cheek, his wretched eye ; and see how his hand, if he has any hand, involuntarily opens, and trembles forth, as the traveller's foot approaches ; and hear his groan, his long and lamentable groan, announce the want that gnaws within him. In midsummer, the sun scorches and burns his aged bald head. In midwinter, the frost glues him to the chilly earth. The hail, rain, and tempest, rudely beat upon him ; and all the winds of heaven, in jocular mood, sport with his withered rags, that, tossed about, display his nakedness to the passers by ; and grievously burlesque the human form. Observe him yet more narrowly. His limbs lie blasted about him, shaken with palsy ; and all his flesh is full of angry sores, and noisome wounds, and his bones of racking pains. A strange vesture is this for an immortal soul. A strange retinue to wait upon a lord of the earth. It seems as if Nature, in some surly mood, after long musing and debating, had tried how vile and miserable a thing her hand could fabricate, and then had made this meagre man ; a sight so full of perfect misery, that passengers turn away their faces, and hasten to be gone ; and delicate and tender women take another path.

And now do you seek the reason of these things ? Of this wide difference in the allotments between man and man, on their Father's earth ? I answer. This great disparity of outward things teaches many lessons ; but this is taught chiefly, although the lesson is learned by few. That God sets no value, and that man should set none, on goods of worldly kind ; on transitory, frail, external things, which are ever migratory, ever changing. And it further teaches, that in the soul alone, the thinking, reasonable, and willing soul, God places the total excellence of man ; and means that he should evermore seek it there.

2. But another feature in the ways of God seems stranger still — the distribution of intellect ; though fewer here complain. Each one appears, upon the whole, content with his own share.

Here is one man, and many such you may have met, who never had a dozen thoughts in all his life, and never

changed their course ; but tells them over, each in its accustomed place, from morning until night, from his youth to hoary old age. His reason rises but a little above the ox that grazes the field ; and so weak is his memory, that he scarcely remembers the name that his mother called him by. And so untaught is his judgment, that what plays fantastically along the swamp at evening, clad in a robe of fiery hue, he thinks to be the devil in disguise, and flies with quivering heart and winged footsteps to his home. Of the word philosophy, or science, he never heard ; nor did he ever hear of liberty, necessity, or the laws of gravitation ; and he never had an unbelieving doubt. He never looked beyond his native valley ; but thinks that the visible line, that girds him round, is the extreme of the world ; and thinks that the silver moon, that on each night leads over him her virgin host, is no broader than his father's shield. He lives, lives where his father lived ; and will die, where he died. He lives happy, and will die happy, and be saved. Be not surprised. He loves and serves his God.

There is another man, of a large understanding, of an infinite memory, of a deep judgment ; one who knows all learning, and knows all science ; and who can trace all phenomena, in heaven and in earth, to their causes. He traces the labyrinths of thought, of association, of passion, and of will ; and all the subtle and nice affinities of matter, its virtues, its motions, and its laws, he traces ; and he talks most familiarly and deeply of things, whether mental, moral, natural, or divine. Leaving the earth at his will, he soars to heaven, and reads the glorious visions of the skies ; and listens intelligently to the music of the rolling spheres ; and gazing far back into the awful depths of Deity, he does all that the most assisted mind can do. And yet, this man lives in misery, and in misery will he die ; because he wants a holiness of heart.

And now do you again seek the reason of these things ? Of this wide disparity of mind and mind in man ? I again answer. That in this, a deeper lesson is taught to mortals, and the branches of their pride are nearer cut. That God places excellence, not in mental, but in moral worth ; and only to the good, and to virtue alone, does he grant happiness.

Then let us admire the goodness of Almighty God. He hath given riches, he hath given intellectual strength, to few ; and therefore he commands none to be either rich, or learned. Nor doth he promise a reward of peace to these. But on all, he hath bestowed moral worth, and he asks a moral tribute from all. And who is there, that cannot pay? Who is born so poor, or of so mean an intellect, as not to know what seems the best ; and when he knows, is not able to do it? As not to know what his God, and his conscience, bid ; and what they bid, is not able to obey? And he, who acts thus, fulfils the eternal law, and will reap its promise of peace. He will find peace this way alone. He, who seeks it otherwise, will seek mellow grapes beneath the icy pole ; will seek blooming roses on the cheek of death ; will seek for substance in a world of fleeting shades.

Thus does it appear, beyond any lingering of a doubt, that God is not delighted, nor is his peace secured, with any degree of natural, or mental wealth. And that in neither natural, nor mental wealth, is found human happiness, or human grandeur. And that the thought were monstrous, and will surely prove vain, to endeavour, with any thing of an earthly sort, with any thing but God, with any thing but moral excellence, and truth, and love, to satisfy and fill the immortal soul.

## REMARKS.

1. *Love God, love truth, love virtue, and be happy.* These were the words first uttered in the ear of every being, that was made rational, and made accountable for his thoughts, words, and deeds. And still these terms remain unchanged, and unchangeable ; unchanged as God, who in his own essential nature eternally binds happiness to virtue, nor lets them part through all his universe.

The Christian faith, which best knows the heart of man, sends him thither, to his own heart, for peace ; and thus declares : Whoever finds it, let him find it there ; and whoever finds it not there, let him forever seek it in vain.

True happiness has no localities, no provincial tones, no peculiar garb. Where Duty goes, she goes, and she goes with Justice, with Meekness, with Charity, and with Love. Wherever a tear is dried, a wounded heart bound up, a bruised spirit anointed with the dew of sympathy, or a pang of honest suffering is soothed, or an oft repeated injury as often forgiven by love; wherever an evil passion is subdued, or the feeble embers of virtue are fanned; wherever a sin is heartily abjured and left; wherever a pious act is done, or a pious prayer is breathed, or a pious wish is wished; there is a high and holy place, a spot of sacred light, a most religious temple, where Happiness, descending, will sit and smile.

2. It is, we own, a subject of much debate, and worthy men stand on the opposing sides, Whether the cup of mortal life has in it more of sweet or sour? This is a vain question, when asked in general terms, and worthy to be left unsolved. If the most is sour, the drinker, and not the cup, is to be blamed. Each person in himself possesses the means to turn the bitter into sweet, and the sweet into bitter. Hence, from out of the self-same fountain, one drinks nectar, and another draughts of gall. Hence, from the self-same quarter of the sky, one sees ten thousand angels look and smile; and another sees as many demons frown. One hears discord, where another's ear is inclined to harmony. The sweet is in the taste, the beauty in the eye, and in the ear is the melody; and in the man himself — for God has laid upon no one a necessity of sinning — is the power to form the taste, to purify the eye, and to tune the ear, so that all he tastes, all he sees, and all he hears, may be harmonious, and sweet, and fair. Whoever will, may groan; whoever will, may sing for joy.

3. Another question is not seldom debated, Whether, in the joys and pleasures of this world, the righteous man, or the sinner, has the greatest share, and which relishes them the most? Truth thus gives the answer, and gives it distinctly, without need of long reasoning: The righteous man. For what of earthly growth, that is worthy the

name of good, is he denied? Truth answers, Nothing. Has he not appetites, and sense, and will? May he not eat, if Providence allows, the finest of the wheat? May he not drink the choicest wine? True, he is temperate; but is ever temperance a foe to peace? May he not rise, and clothe himself in gold; and ascend, and stand in the palaces of kings? True, he is honest still, and charitable; but are these virtues foes to human peace? May he not do exploits, and gain a name? Most true, he treads not down a fellow's right, nor walks up to a throne on skulls of men; but are justice and mercy ever foes to peace? Has he not friendships, and loves, and smiles, and hopes? Do not there sit around his table sons and daughters? Is not his ear pleased with music? his eye with light? his nostrils with perfumes? and his lips with pleasant relishes? Do not his herds grow? Does not the rain fall upon his meadows? Does he not reap his harvests? And does not his heart revel, at his will, unconfined through all the charities and sympathies of nature? And are not all these sweetened and sanctified by the dews of holiness, which are shed from above? May he not walk through the airy halls of Fancy? May he not survey the ample page of History? May he not, finally, explore the depths of mental, moral, natural, and divine Philosophy? But why thus enumerate? One word is enough. There is no joy in all created things, no drop of sweet, that turns not in the end to sour, of which the righteous man does not partake; and partake, invited by the voice of God, by his Father's voice, who gives him all his heart's desire. And over the sinner, the Christian, whether he be the noble or the peasant, the novice or the philosopher, has still this one more advantage; that when his earthly pleasures fail — and fail they always do to every soul of man — he sends his hopes on high, looks up, and reaches his sickle forth, and reaps the fields of heaven, and plucks the clusters from the vines of God.



## NABOTH'S VINEYARD.

### SERMON XLVIII.

1 *Kings*, xxi, 2. — AND AHAB SPAKE UNTO NABOTH, SAYING, GIVE ME THY VINEYARD, THAT I MAY HAVE IT FOR A GARDEN OF HERBS, BECAUSE IT IS NEAR UNTO MINE HOUSE.

IN THE Days of the Kings, there was in Samaria a wicked king, who had a very wicked wife. They lived about nine hundred years before the Messiah's Advent. The king's name was Ahab. The queen's name was Jezebel. And they had a poor, but pious neighbour, whose name was Naboth. Naboth had a little vineyard, in Jezreel, hard by the king's palace. And Ahab spake unto his neighbour Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto mine house; and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it; or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. This vineyard was near Jezebel's palace, and the king, thinking it would be a pretty addition to his grounds, set his heart upon it; he must have it for his own. And he made a fair proposal for it, had it been lawful for Naboth to have sold the vineyard; but the law forbade the Israelites to sell or alienate any ground, except in extraordinary cases, and then only until the year of jubilee. And Naboth said to Ahab, The Lord forbid it me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. He esteemed it to be, not only unlawful, but injurious and dishonourable to his successors, to part with the vineyard. And Ahab went into his house heavy and displeased, because Naboth would

not give up the inheritance of his fathers; and he laid him down upon his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread. But Jezebel his wife came in to him, and said unto him, Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? And the king said, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite, saying, Give me thy vineyard for money; or else, if it please thee, I will give thee another vineyard for it; and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. He stated it falsely; he said, I *may not* do it. And Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite. This Jezebel was a *heathen princess*, and Ahab had broken the law of God by marrying her; and we shall soon see the evil of improper matrimonial connexions. She says to the king, her husband, It is not becoming thy dignity and power as a monarch, to lay to heart the denial of a subject. Hast thou set thine eye upon the vineyard? Show thyself an absolute prince, and seize upon it by force. Fear not; I will procure it for thee. Ahab wanted neither wit nor wickedness; but, compared with Jezebel, he was a mere novice. So Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal; which could not be done, probably, without the king's consent. Perhaps, it was the same seal, wherewith, before this event, she had sealed the death-warrants of the Lord's prophets. And this audacious woman sent the letters, thus royally sealed, unto the elders, and to the nobles, that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth on high among the people; and set two men, sons of Belial, before him, to bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst blaspheme God and the king; and then carry him out, and stone him, that he may die. As if done with a pious design, this artful woman proclaimed *a fast*, and ordered Naboth to be set on high, that every body might see him, and hear what was alleged against him. These suborned witnesses, called sons of Belial, were men of no conscience, ready to swear any thing for reward. Jezebel had joined both God and the king in the accusation, because if he had

blasphemed God, he would have been put to death, but his estate not forfeited ; but if he had blasphemed God and the king, his estate would also be confiscated. And it is very strange, and melancholy, that the men of Naboth's own city, even the elders and the nobles, either through envy of Naboth, or fear of the queen, did as Jezebel had ordered them in her letters. They proclaimed the fast; they set Naboth, their neighbour, on high; they suborned the two children of Belial, as they are aptly named; and the men of Belial witnessed against innocent Naboth; and he was condemned. Then they carried him forth out of the city, that the city might not be polluted, and stoned him with stones, that he died. Naboth had blasphemed neither God, nor the king. But these perjured men wished to ingratiate themselves with queen Jezebel, and perhaps envied so conscientious a man as Naboth, who worshipped Jehovah, as they worshipped Baal. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, and is dead. And when Jezebel heard that Naboth was stoned, and was dead; with a remorseless pleasure, that she had obtained it without pay, she said to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead. And when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, Ahab rose up, and without any crimination of the queen, or self-accusation, as we learn, he rode down in great pomp to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take possession of it.

But judgment will overtake the guilty. Now the Lord called unto Elijah, the prophet, saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which is in Samaria; behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to possess it. And speak thou this to him, Thus saith the Lord, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? And then prophesy this unto him. Thus saith the Lord, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And Ahab, conscience-smitten Ahab, said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? Ambitious and covetous men are prone to think all their enemies, who oppose, or do not sanction, their wicked schemes. And Elijah answered, I have

found thee; because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord. And, behold, the Lord will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity. And of Jezebel also spake the Lord, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city, the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field, shall the fowls of the air eat. Now there was none like unto this Ahab, who did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. He also did very abominably in following idols. And when Ahab heard the denunciation of holy Elijah, he rent his clothes, as was the Eastern custom in affliction, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in the hard, chafing sackcloth, and went softly, or barefoot, as mourners were wont to do. And therefore, the Lord said to Elijah, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? Because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days; but in his son's days, will I bring the evil upon his house. It appears that Ahab's repentance was very superficial, as he did not put away his idols, nor restore the vineyard; and therefore the just judgment of God was only delayed in its catastrophe, until the day of his wicked son, who never had even the temporary penitence of his father.

For, in about *three years after*, we read, that the idolatrous Ahab, king of Israel, sought an artful alliance with the pious Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, whose son had married Ahab's daughter, to go up to battle against Ramoth in Gilead, in Syria. And the king of Judah said to the king of Israel, I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses. And the two kings joined affinity, forces to forces, and horses to horses, to go up.

Before they went up to battle, the two kings, sitting each on his throne, and decorated in their royal robes, in a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria, had all the prophets to prophesy before them. And Ahab's four hundred false prophets, who were seduced by a lying spirit, said unto Ahab, Go up, and prosper. But Jehoshaphat's one true prophet, whom Ahab hated, because

he had never flattered him, prophesied in a vision. He saw the men of Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep without a shepherd ; as men without a master. And for this prophecy of evil, king Ahab had him confined in a prison, and fed with the bread and the water of affliction, until his return in peace should falsify his augury. And the true prophet called upon the people, every one of them, to hearken, that if Ahab returned at all in peace, the Lord had not spoken by him.

Now after the two allied kings had gone up to Ramoth in Gilead, to war against it; the king of Israel said to the king of Judah, I will disguise myself, and enter into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. Thus king Ahab, being deceived by a lying spirit, disguised himself, and went into the battle. And thus king Jehoshaphat, having on the royal robes, and commanding the army, being taken for king Ahab, came very near being killed. For the Syrian king had commanded the thirty and two captains over his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save only with the king of Israel. But although the king of Israel, by his disguise, escaped captivity, or destruction, by the Syrian army; yet it appears, that the imprisoned prophet, eating his bread and water of affliction, at home, in his lonely cell, had spoken truly. For, moved no doubt by the invisible hand of God, a certain man drew a bow at a venture, and smote king Ahab between the joints of the harness ; wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host, for I am wounded. And although the battle increased after this, yet did they stay up the king in his chariot against the Syrians, hiding his disaster, until he died at even. And the blood ran out of the wound into the midst of the chariot. So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; and they buried the king in Samaria. And one washed his chariot, and his armour, in the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood, according unto the word of the Lord. Thus was the prophecy of Elijah accomplished, In the *manner that*, as it should be rendered, not the *place where*, dogs licked the blood of Naboth, shall dogs lick thy blood, even thine.

But we have not yet done with that hairy man, whose loins were girt with a girdle of leather ; that holy prophet of the Lord, Elijah the Tishbite. There remains another, and yet another, part of his prophecy to be fulfilled. And what became of the wicked Jezebel, who stirred up Ahab to his wickedness ? and of whom it was prophesied, that *the dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel ?* This prediction was yet to prove a true one. For, we read, in another book of Scripture, that *about fifteen years after*, as we compute ; and when Jehu, the captain, and furious chariot-driver, was anointed king of Israel, he was commanded to go, and to smite the wicked house of Ahab, that the blood of the murdered prophets, and the blood of Naboth, might be avenged at the hand of Jezebel. For this purpose, king Jehu went up and made desperate battle against the two kings, the son and grandson of the late king Ahab, and conquered and slew them, as it had been foretold. And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, the wicked queen-mother, Jezebel, heard of it. And instead of clothing herself in mourning, and praying for mercy, she painted her face, and tired her head, and looked out at a window ; thinking perhaps that her sex would secure her, or her majesty daunt him. And as king Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, hoping probably to intimidate him, Had Zimri peace, who slew his master ? And he lifted up his face to the window, and said, Who is on my side ? Who ? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs ; that is, chamberlains or pages. And he said Throw her down. So they threw her down ; perhaps glad to be revenged upon their haughty and blood-thirsty mistress ; or through fear, to court the clemency of Jehu toward themselves. So they threw her down ; and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses ; and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and drink, and said, Go, see now this cursed woman, and bury her ; for she is a king's daughter. And they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. So hated and loathed was she, that no one cared to bury her, as had been foretold ; and the dogs so mangled her body, that one could not say, This is Jezebel. Thus was the

word of the Lord, by the mouth of his prophet, executed in the most awful manner, upon this very wicked, and wretched woman ; namely, *That in the portion of Jezreel, in that part where Naboth's vineyard was, shall dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel.*

And moreover, we further read that, after the defeat and slaughter of the two kings, the son and grandson of Ahab ; and the degrading death of the detestable queen-mother, Jezebel ; king Jehu sent, and had the heads of seventy other sons of Ahab, which lived in Samaria, cut off, and brought to him in baskets in Jezreel. And likewise that, when he soon after went down from Jezreel into Samaria himself, he slew two and forty more grandsons, or near kin, of Ahab, at the pit of the shearing-house. Thus was the tremendous prediction, pronounced by the prophet Elijah, upon the house of Ahab, upon both root and branch, for their great wickedness ; and especially for the murder of the pious Naboth, his poor neighbour, and the taking away of his little vineyard, to which he was stirred up by his wife Jezebel ; most strictly and awfully consummated.

#### REFLECTIONS.

1. Although we read, that king Ahab had made himself an *ivory house*, and had built *many cities*, and had other and better vineyards, he yet coveted the one poor little paternal vineyard of his neighbour Naboth, for a garden of herbs, because it was near his palace. And when he could not buy it, he was willing to murder his neighbour, to obtain it. Such, and so awful, is the end of unrestrained covetousness.

2. Naboth had been very happy in his little vineyard, and probably did not covet the king's royal gardens, or palaces. But the position of it proved fatal to his peace, and even to his life. If it had been in some obscure place, it had doubtless been uncoveted, and he had lived long to enjoy it. So little do we know what it is best for us to have. So dangerous is it often, to be too near to great

neighbours. And so, frequently, do a man's possessions prove a snare unto him.

3. We should feel humbled, when we perceive the wickedness that is committed under the name of religion. A fast was proclaimed, and a mock trial was instituted, to cover a most barbarous plot against an innocent man. But fasting and prayer are not unholy, because thus abused. Nor is innocence less innocent, because thus injured.

4. *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?* Thus are God's ministers deemed enemies for telling the truth. Nevertheless, 'with a resolution as high as heaven, and a pang of seraphic zeal,' they must not hold back, when God commands. And thus will the judgments of God ever follow after the sinner. If they do not speedily come, or even should they never come in this world, yet in another world, will a man's own conscience be constrained to say, *Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?*

5. How easily can God turn our comforts into torments. What is gotten by sin, cannot satisfy. Ahab had no sooner gotten his vineyard, and gone down to view it, and trim it, and enjoy it, than down comes that hated Tishbite with his startling, *I have found thee*; and his appalling prediction. And this was but the beginning of his sorrows.

6. We are taught by this history, that there may be an outward show of repentance, without an inward, abiding sincerity. There may be a rending of the garments, a putting on of sackcloth, a sitting in the dust, and walking softly, without a humbled and renewed heart. God is pleased even with a temporary, partial penitence, rather than none; but it is only the genuine, and radical penitent, that will escape not only temporal, but eternal punishments.

7. Not one word of the Lord shall fall to the ground. His judgments fail not. The threatenings, which were long delayed, were all fulfilled upon the house of Ahab. The dogs licked the blood of Ahab. The dogs ate the mangled limbs of Jezebel. God remembered the little vineyard of poor murdered Naboth. And he will remember our sins. The miserable end of the wretched Jeze-



bel is very affecting. Proud, and voluptuous, and cruel, and idolatrous, and a king's daughter, and a king's wife also ; she was pitched out of the window upon the wall by her own servants, trodden under foot by the horses of Jehu, and so garbled by the dogs, that no one could know her to say, *This is Jezebel*. Thus ever will the enemies of God perish, and their memories shall rot.

8. Women and Wives should here take careful warning, from the example of this wicked queen, Jezebel. Before this domestic murder of Naboth, this *cursed woman*, as she is called by Jehu, who lived through *three reigns*, had introduced idolatry ; had slain the Lord's prophets ; and stirred up the heart of her husband, and her sons, to do wickedly. But her day came at last. And even a false, and seducing prophetess was afterwards *called by her name* ; and, like her, received a fearful ruin, as we read in the *Apocalypse*. Let then all wives hence learn, not to stir up their husbands to do wickedly, lest some Jehu of the Lord be sent to drive furiously his judgments against them, as he did against that wretched woman, Jezebel.

9. We learn, how soon the most secure, and numerous families may be cut off, by the judgments of God. In a moment, as it were, the seventy sons, and two and forty grandsons, of Ahab, had their heads in the baskets, and their bodies in the shearing-house pit, by the furious energy of the Lord's avenger, Jehu, when they saw no danger. Thus, in the midst of life, are men in death ; and therefore should men *be always ready*.

10. We should learn, from the character of Jehu, to have our zeal according to knowledge. Jehu had zeal, but he had also much falsehood and fraud joined with it ; and he retained his favourite idolatry. And his, *Come, see my zeal*, neutralized the whole. Thus should we guard against a partial subjection to God ; and not think, because we perform some religious duties, that we may neglect others, which are less agreeable ; if we would hope for the rewards, not merely of a partial, but of a universal obedience.

# THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

## SERMON XLIX.

*Psalm lxxxvi, 5. — THOU, LORD, ART GOOD.*

WHEN we look out into the world, does not the eye perceive, does not the heart feel, that the Lord is good to all the creatures he hath made ; to the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, the herds on the hills, and the insects in the breeze ; to every living thing that walks upon this beautiful green earth, swims within the cool dark waters, or flies beneath the warm blue sky ?

But it will be my present purpose to prove, *principally from Scripture*, that the Lord is particularly good to *Mankind*. Wherever we turn our view, whether up to the influences of the heavens, or down to the issues of the earth ; whether into far distant lands, or abroad on the ocean ; over the busy scenes of life, or into the domestic circle ; all proves, that whatever may be the character of man, whether holy or unholy, grateful or ungrateful, the text ever has been, and is now abundantly true — *Thou, Lord, art good.*

### I. GOD IS GOOD TO MANKIND IN GENERAL.

1. God is good, not to *one nation only*, not to the crowded and cultivated citizen of London or of Paris, of Pekin or of Rome, merely, is he good ; but to the scattered and less refined inhabitants of Kamscatka and the Isles of the Ocean ; to the proud princes in the palace and the humble dwellers in the caves, is he alike good. Many, O Lord, cries grateful David, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thoughts which are to us-ward ; they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee ;

if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered. And what says God in Jeremiah ? I will rejoice over them to do them good. And what says John ? The Father himself loveth you. And Paul ? Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy. Surely, *Thou, Lord, art good.*

2. The goodness of God is *impartial*. God is no respecter of persons. The poor, as well as the rich, have souls equally welcome to be saved, and equally liable to be lost. Whether Jew or Gentile, he is the same Lord, rich unto all that call upon his name. We read that, in a temporal sense, he that gathered much had nothing to spare ; and he that gathered little had no lack. Upon the just and the unjust, is sent the former and the latter rain ; and seed-time, and harvest, health, friends, and worldly good things happen to all alike. And, in a spiritual sense, to all who will obey the truth, whether Scythian or Barbarian, bond or free, the answer is in Luke, that yet there is room. And in Revelation we read, Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely. How different is this, from the goodness of man.

3. The goodness of God is *unchangeable*. This goodness does not depend upon any caprice, nor is it liable to be withdrawn. It is not confined to one, or two, or any particular number of years, but is unlimited in all the years of man's pilgrimage. In Isaiah God says, Can a woman forget her sucking child ? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. And again, The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed ; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee. And in Hebrews says God, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. How different is this also, from the goodness of man.

## II. THE GOODNESS OF GOD IS MANIFESTED TOWARDS MANKIND, IN PARTICULAR INSTANCES.

1. In forming them for *happiness*. God was under no obligation to form man for happiness. He was perfectly happy in himself, and the happiness of man could not add to his happiness. But he did thus form man, be-

cause he delights to communicate of his goodness. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. If man did not long continue in this happy garden, it was not from any want of the goodness of God, but of his own heart. For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil.

2. In their *preservation*. Who is there, that has not had reason to exclaim, O thou preserver of men ! Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved my spirit. I laid me down and slept ; I awaked, for the Lord sustained me. Thy right hand upholdeth me. Who is it, that hath hitherto preserved us from lightning and tempest ; from plague, pestilence, and famine ; from battle and murder, and from sudden death ? Surely, it is of the Lord's mercies, that we are not consumed ; because his compassions fail not. Great is thy faithfulness.

3. In providing for their *support* and *comfort*. It is of the Lord's pleasure and power, that mankind are created and preserved ; but it is of his goodness that their lives are made comfortable. How few are there in the world, who cannot exclaim, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. The rich man can say, Who satisfieth my mouth with good things. And the poor man can say, I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me. Thou, O God, hast prepared of thy goodness for the poor.

4. In giving them the pleasures of *domestic life*. It is owing to the goodness of God, that man was not left to wander forlorn in lone places, without any confidence in his brother man, or any capacity for social enjoyment. But God setteth the solitary in families. They are blessed with the endearments of love and affection. Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord. Their little ones rise up like olive plants about their table, the hope of their youth, and the stay of their age. In this thing, is not the Lord good ?

5. In delivering them out of *affliction*, or *supporting* them under it. In this world, on account of sin, man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward. But unto

those that trust in him, The Lord will be a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in time of trouble. Unto God the Lord belong the issues from death. It is he, who healeth all thy diseases ; who redeemeth thy life from destruction. He says, and it is a most gracious consolation to those called to endure the trials of this life, When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee ; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee ; and when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. He says to the dying father, Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive ; and let thy widows trust in me. He enables the dying father to reply to his orphans, Behold, I die ; but God shall be with you.

6. In *pardoning their sins*. We are all ready to confess that we are sinners, and if sinners, that we need forgiveness. How good then is God, who pardoneth all who repent of their sins, and turn unto him. He looketh upon man, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profiteth me not, he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. He retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. How shall I give thee up, Ephraim ? how shall I deliver thee, Israel ? O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself ; but in me is thy help. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely. The Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, though we have rebelled against him. Thou, Lord, art good ; with thee there is forgiveness, that thou mayest be feared.

7. In giving them *instruction and assistance*. God is good, in that man is not left to work out his own salvation with fear and trembling alone ; but I will instruct and teach thee, says God, in the way which thou shalt go. O God, thou hast taught me from my youth, says pious David. My Father, thou art the guide of my youth, may we each one of us say. If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children ; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.

8. In granting them the *hope of immortality*. The goodness of God is not confined to this world, but is ex-

tended throughout eternity to his chosen ones. My flesh also shall rest in hope, says the Psalmist. Thou wilt show me the path of life ; in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore. As for me, says David, I shall behold thy face in righteousness ; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness. And again, God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave. With this triumphant hope, the pious soul can exclaim, O Death, where is thy sting ? O Grave, where is thy victory ?

9. In the *promulgation of the Christian Religion*. Herein is the goodness of God most manifestly displayed ; especially to us, who have the knowledge of a Saviour, whereby the *hope* of pardon is *confirmed* to believers. When by some mysterious, and melancholy fatuity, man had fallen from his high estate, and lost his hope of happiness ; when there was no eye to pity, and no created arm to save ; then did thine eye pity, and thine arm wrought salvation, O thou lover of the souls of men ! And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. The direction is always, Knock, and it shall be opened. The invitation is always, Come unto me, and ye shall in no wise be cast out. This is not said to the old or the young, the rich or the poor, the learned or the ignorant, in particular ; but to all—to all, who will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and obey his gospel. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Whose heart will not burn within him, at such love as this ? Whose lips will not be eager to respond to the text : *Thou, Lord, art good.*

#### REFLECTIONS.

If then the Goodness of God is thus manifested to Mankind in *general* ; if this goodness is impartial, and unchangeable : And if the goodness of God is likewise manifested to mankind in *particular instances* ; in forming them for happiness, in their preservation, in providing for their support and comfort, in giving them the pleasures of domestic life, in delivering them out of affliction or sup-

porting them under it, in pardoning their sins, in giving them instruction and assistance, in granting them the hope of immortality, and in the promulgation of the christian religion ; if the Lord is so good to us, what return shall we render unto him, for all his loving kindness ? How shall we show our gratitude ? And how give evidence of the sincerity of it ? An answer to this may be comprised under three heads : *Loving God ; leading virtuous lives ; and loving the brotherhood.*

1. We must *love God*. God is love. We should love him, because he first loved us. We should love God, because it is the first command in the Decalogue. In return for all his goodness, what doth God ask ? Simply this. He says, My son, give me thine heart. And in view of the many instances of the goodness of God to mankind, especially in that of sending a Saviour to redeem a captive world ; what heart but will exclaim in glowing rapture, with the Psalmist, Bless the Lord, O my soul ; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities ; who healeth all thy diseases ; who redeemeth thy life from destruction ; who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies. Let us never be reproached by others, or reproach ourselves, with ingratitude to God. Let it never be asked of us, Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people and unwise ? Let it never be said, They sang his praise, they soon forgot his works. Let it never be imputed unto us, When they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful.

2. We must *lead virtuous lives*. To be like God, who is continually doing good, we also must strive to do good. To be virtuous is to resemble the Deity. Obedience is the best expression of gratitude to the Supreme Being. Do that which is good, and no evil shall touch thee. To depart from wickedness is a thing pleasing to the Lord, and to forsake unrighteousness is a propitiation. They that sin are enemies to their own life. A little with righteousness, is better than much with unrighteousness. True dealing shall endure forever. Righteousness is im-

mortal. Ever remember that, Great is the Truth. She doeth the things that are just. Above all things, truth beareth away the victory. Whatsoever thou takest in hand, remember the end, and thou shalt never do amiss. Let not your strength be the law of justice. Recollect that it is the fruit, that declareth if the tree have been dressed. Especially, let us all remember, in view of the goodness of God, that our goodness must be active. That prayers, without endeavours, are said to be like Rachel, in her solitary years, beautiful but barren. Then let us improve upon the proverb, so that our prayers may be like Rachel, in her happier years, not only beautiful but *bearing*.

3. We must *love the brotherhood*. In imitation of God, we should love all mankind ; for he hath made the small and the great, and in things temporal, careth for all alike. But in imitation of him also, in things spiritual, we should especially love those, whom we believe to be of the household of faith. Hereby shall ye know if ye love me, if ye love one another. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour ; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. One man beareth hatred against another, and doth he seek pardon from the Lord ? he sheweth no mercy to a man, which is like himself ; and doth he ask forgiveness of his own sins ? If you conceive aught against another, be not hasty in your judgment. Admonish a friend ; it may be he hath not done it, and if he have done it, that he do it no more. Admonish thy friend ; it may be he hath not said it, or if he have, that he speak it not again. Admonish a friend ; for many times it is a slander ; and believe not every tale. There is one that slippeth in his speech, but not from his heart ; and who is he, that hath not offended with his tongue ? In all things, judge of thy neighbour by thyself. In daily intercourse, remember that sweet language will multiply friends, and a fair speaking tongue will increase kind greetings. ‘This, O Christian, is the command which we have heard from the beginning, and it will ever continue in unimpaired force, that he who loveth God, should love his brother also ; and should express that love, not in word and profession alone, but in deed and in truth. You are to love your neigh-



bour as yourself ; to love the whole creation of God ; and so far as your influence can extend, must endeavour to make it happy.' Brethren, When we see all above and below, and all around us, proclaiming with eloquent tongues, *Thou, Lord, art good !* And, more especially, when we feel a spirit within us crying, *Thou, Lord, art good !* we should lay aside, not only all private jealousies, but all sectional differences, and sectarian prejudices ; and ever seek to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. Christians, says Bishop Taylor, should not be like the thorn and bramble, endeavouring which shall tear and wound each other the most ; but like the vine and olive, striving which shall bear the most and the best fruit.

Finally. If we thus love God, and lead virtuous lives, and love the brotherhood, in this short and passing world ; we shall be enabled, through divine mercy, and divine aid, when we are called to leave the scenes of time, to cry in holy rapture of soul, throughout ages after ages, even forever and forevermore, in the world of glory, *Thou, Lord, art good ! Thou, Lord, art good !*

# RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

## SERMON L.

1 Cor. xv, 35. — HOW ARE THE DEAD RAISED UP? AND  
WITH WHAT BODY DO THEY COME?

THIS is a very natural, as well as very solemn question, which arises in the mind of every reflecting person. When we look abroad, we behold a vast world of men, women, and children; of various nations, climates, and languages; of different ages, constitutions, and characters; all now busily employed in their peculiar vocations; the most of them full of life, and gladness, and hope: and the heart is pained, that, in a few years, all these people will cease from their activity and enterprises; their enjoyments and anticipations; and be returned to their original earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes. This truth also comes nearer home. When we look around in our own towns, among our own relations and acquaintances, we find, here and there, one and another, gone from the family circle, and the meeting of friends; some bosom companion, or some kind neighbour, whom we used to visit; gone from our reach, carried away, and laid where they are no more seen. From these affecting truths, does not the mind often turn to the promised resurrection of the body, when the bereaved heart hopes again to meet its departed friends? But here the mind is sometimes saddened by its own inquiry, *How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?* As if it asks, Can this body, which is all decayed into dust, and perhaps disappeared into nothing, be again raised into life? And will the future body

be such, that we may again know our dear friends? An answer to this inquiry is the subject of this sermon.

I. Notwithstanding the denial, and objections, of the *ancient Sadducees*, the *Athenian philosophers*, and *modern Infidels*, I shall take for granted, that there will be a future resurrection of the human body, as it is abundantly revealed in the Gospel. *For if the dead rise not*, argues St Paul, *then is not Christ raised*. Here all Sadducism is removed. Here, 'the resurrection of the body is asserted, and proved. The proof alleged, is the resurrection of Christ; and the argument may be advantageously exhibited in the following manner. Christ predicted his own resurrection, and actually rose in the manner predicted. He thus proved both his power to do every thing, and his veracity in all his declarations. But he has declared, that he will raise up, at the last day, all that are in their graves. Thus his own resurrection is a complete proof of the general resurrection of mankind.'

II. 1. But some man will say, *How are the dead raised up? and with what bodies do they come?* That is, in what sense will the same body be raised? Will it be composed of all the particles that ever formed a part of the body during life? or will it be the same body as that in which we died? To these queries, both reason and revelation answer, No. The whole number of atoms, which have during life served to compose the body, would be sufficient to form many similar bodies. And the bodies in which persons die are frequently emaciated, and loathsome. In St Paul's simile of the grain of wheat, which is not quickened except it die; he says, thou sowest not that body which shall be, but God giveth it a body, as it hath pleased him. So also is the resurrection of the dead. Again he says, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God. If it now be asked, what will be the precise nature of the raised body? We answer, we know not. It is not revealed. Neither did St John, the most beloved and intimate disciple of our Lord know. He says, it doth not yet appear what we shall be. This should teach us not

to be too curious about what is unnecessary for us to know, and is perhaps above our present comprehension.

2. But with whatever body the dead shall arise, it is evident, that there will be a great change. Christ, says St Paul, shall *change* our vile body. It is agreeable to the order of nature, that the body of every being is adapted to its state; and when a being changes its state, it changes its body. This rule holds throughout the universe, in every region of nature. Against the human change itself therefore, there is no argument; but, on the contrary, a striking one in its favour, from analogy. A tree dies in winter; its leaves fall, its circulation stops. In the spring, it has its revivification; it again lives in new verdure and bloom. The same is true of some animals, which remain torpid, as if dead, during a part of the year, and yet revive. There are also some animals, which begin their lives under the water, and afterwards live upon the earth. But there is a wonderful change in the order of insects, which seems as if designed to typify the glorious resurrection of man. Look at the humble caterpillar, crawling upon the low ground. In a few weeks, see him die, and dissolve, as it were, in his own tomb. What can you see here, in this shapeless, unorganized mass, that promises a future revival? Yet, in a little time, behold the sepulchre is opened, and a new creature, of a new and superior form, of new and more elevated powers and instincts, a beautiful butterfly bursts forth, and delights, and expatiates in a new element. Hence it was with a delicate propriety, that the Ancients, considering this ethereal insect a type of the human soul, painted one issuing from the lips of a dying person. These, we acknowledge, are but analogies; but they serve to prove, that the new body will be adapted to its new state of existence.

3. But whether our bodies, at the resurrection, will be strictly new bodies, or the same bodies under a new form, is of little importance, provided we remain conscious that we are the same persons. Consciousness is what constitutes personal identity. In this life, our bodies are continually changing, yet all the alterations in size, or feature, caused by time or sickness, do not prevent us from feeling, and knowing, that we are the same persons.

With this consciousness we shall rise from the grave. And that the body will hereafter be the same, *in such a sense as to be known*, appears strongly intimated in Revelation. Departed spirits, in their intermediate state, are represented as known to each other. Many, says the Saviour, shall come from the east, and from the west, and shall sit down, in the kingdom of God, with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob. Here it seems implied, that these spirits should *know* these Patriarchs. King David, when he had lost his child, said, I shall *go to him*, but he shall not return unto me. Again, in the parable, Lazarus, Abraham, and Dives, are exhibited as *known* to each other. Likewise, on the Mount of Transfiguration, Moses, and Elias, although disembodied spirits, were *known* by the disciples, while yet in the flesh. St Paul, also, speaks of presenting his converts, at the last day, perfect in Christ Jesus ; from which we infer that he expected to *know* them, in their new and glorious state. And when Christ declares, that at that time the secrets of the heart shall be disclosed; it seems to import, that they shall be disclosed to those, who were before the witnesses of our actions. From these passages, and from the suggestions of reason, it appears sufficiently evident, that mankind *will know each other* in the future world, and that their bodies will be so far the same, as to become the means of this knowledge.

III. Let us now examine more particularly *the nature of the change* in our bodies, at the resurrection, as it is specified, in many sublime particulars, by the revelation of *St Paul*.

1. The body will be raised *incorruptible*. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. In the present life, the human body has the seeds of decay within it, as soon as it is born. The body of man does not last so long, as the house he builds to live in. The strength of health yields to the stronger power of disease. Even little babes, innocent and fresh from the hand of their Maker, fade and wither away, like the blossom before the mildew. The robust soldier, the active citizen, and the delicate female, no less than the venerable elder, soon cease from

their campaigns, their enterprises, their pleasures, and their counsels, and lie down in their native dust.

But how glorious is the thought, that this body is to revive, and bid defiance to the power of disease, and death. That to those who rise to the resurrection of life, hunger and thirst, pain, dissolution, and corruption, are bounded by the tomb. And not only will the body be raised *incorruptible*, but *immortal*. This mortal shall put on immortality. That is, it shall not only be exempted from internal decay, but also from the external power of annihilation, for ever and ever.

2. The body will be raised in *glory*. It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory. In this world, the body is frail, and imperfect, and debased. But at the resurrection, this vile body, says the Apostle, is to be changed like unto the glorious body of the Saviour. Of this glorious body, we have an account in his Transfiguration on the Mount, as it appeared to Peter, James, and John. He was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment became white and glistering. In the Revelation, we have a similar, but more detailed exhibition of the Saviour's glorified body, at the supreme splendour of which, St John records, And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. St Stephen, at his martyrdom, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. And St Paul, at his miraculous conversion, saw a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, and this intense effulgence enclosed the Saviour. How overpowering is it to our present faculties, to conceive of our earthly bodies being raised to such ineffable glory.

3. The body will be raised in *power*. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. While in our present body, how feeble, how very limited, are our faculties, our endeavours, and our performances. But in the future body, we shall be able to act out our conceptions, without cessation, or exhaustion. Our Saviour declares that, in the resurrection, the righteous will be *like unto the angels*; that is, will possess kindred attributes. Those, who are now styled in Scripture but worms of the dust, shall hereafter revive to range through the heavens; and perhaps,

like *Moses* and *Elias*, if they are thus holy, be permitted to visit other worlds, in company with the Saviour.

4. The body will be raised a *spiritual body*. It is sown a natural body ; it is raised a spiritual body. Flesh and blood, that is, the natural or animal body, says the Apostle, cannot inherit the kingdom of God. What a *spiritual body* may be, we cannot, while in the carnal body, distinctly comprehend. 'Some of the Ancient Fathers supposed it to be a body, which, having no need of the animal functions, was preserved in life by the mere inhabitation of the mind.' St Paul, after declaring that there is an animal body, and there is a spiritual body ; observes that they, who are earthy, are like the *earthy Adam* ; and they, who are heavenly, like the *heavenly Adam* ; and that, as we have borne the image of the *earthy*, so we shall bear the image of the *heavenly*. But whatever may be the spiritual body, we may well rejoice, that it will resemble the ever-glorious body of the great, and lovely *quickening Spirit* in the Heavens.

From a thorough examination of this grand, and mysterious event, the future resurrection of the dead ; although we are obliged to confess, that as yet we are allowed to see but as through a glass darkly ; there have usually been inferred, from what is revealed, the following particulars, viz :

*First*, That we shall have bodies ; and that these bodies will not be bodies of flesh and blood.

*Secondly*, That the body will be greatly superior to our present body ; and be suited to the superior state of life upon which it is to enter, agreeably to the universal law, that the body of every being is adapted to its state, and that, when it changes its state, it changes its body.

*Thirdly*, That its organs of perception, and of enjoyment, will be of a far purer and nobler nature, than those of the earthly body ; none of them proving temptations to sin, but all of them helps to holiness.

*Fourthly*, That, whether the body be a new body, or the same body under a new form ; no change, however great, or even entire, will hinder us from feeling a consciousness, that we are the same persons, both in ourselves, and in relation to others.

*Fifthly*, That whatever change the dead are to undergo, the living who remain to hear the trump of the Archangel, will experience the same change ; and that the change in both the quick and dead will be made in the twinkling of an eye.

*Lastly*, That, after this mighty and glorious change, as we shall know ourselves ; so also may it be inferred, that we shall know, and be known by, our former friends.

Such are the animating results drawn from a discussion of the future Resurrection of the Saints.

#### REMARKS.

1. It appears, so far as our knowledge extends, that the Creator has made but *three sorts* of intelligent beings. Angels, who are pure spirit. Brutes, which are purely animal. And Man, who is a compound of the spiritual and animal nature. Of these, the middle rank, that is, man, is the most wonderful, whether considered philosophically, or morally. It is more difficult to conceive of the union of two such opposites, as spirit and matter, than to conceive of spirit and matter existing separately. In a moral view also, man is perhaps the most interesting ; being destined to exist in two distinct worlds, in two distinct natures. Man is the only creature, unto whom pertains the resurrection from the dead. Angels never die. Brutes never revive.

2. It has been made a question, What is the nature of the intermediate state, between the death of the body and the resurrection ? That is, Does the soul remain insensible ; or is it detained in a separate place, called the place of departed spirits ; or does it enter into the supreme Heaven, or ultimate Hell ; previous to the resurrection of the body ? Respecting these inquiries, there has ever been much debate among even the most profound divines. That the soul is to sleep until the resurrection, was the belief, among others, of Milton. This however is not the general belief. Nor is it of much moment in itself. For if the soul remain for that time *unconscious*,



one hour and one thousand years will be to it all the same. It will never know it has waited. As to the *places*, where the dead will reside, between their departure from this world, and the final judgment ; it must be acknowledged, says the late President Dwight, that the language of the Scriptures furnishes a foundation for some difference of opinion. ' Several expressions, found in both Testaments, seem to indicate an *intermediate place*, as well as an *intermediate state of existence*, between this world, and the final scenes of retribution. After a considerable examination of this subject, says he, and an examination of several able commentators, who have handled it to some extent, I am obliged to confess myself not altogether satisfied ; and to say, that hitherto I have found difficulties on both sides.' These difficulties arise from the different significations of the Hebrew word *Sheol*, the Greek *Hades*, and the Latin *Orcus* ; commonly rendered *Hell*, or the *Grave*, in our translation, but which do not properly signify either ; but always *the place of departed spirits*. There is also a manifest difference between the word *Hades*, and the other words *Tartarus*, and *Gehenna*, used in Scripture, and sometimes translated the same. Besides, our Saviour said to the thief on the cross, this day shalt thou be with me in *Paradise*. But that this did not mean the supreme Heaven, is inferred from his own declaration : Thou wilt not leave my soul in *Sheol*, or *Hades* ; whither his soul went, when he gave up the ghost on the cross. ' But whatever may be true concerning an intermediate *place* of existence, there can, I apprehend, be no reasonable doubt concerning an intermediate *state*.' Although the *full amount* of happiness or misery will not probably be awarded previous to the resurrection ; yet it is believed, that good men, at death, immediately begin to enjoy, and bad men, to suffer. Lazarus died, and was comforted ; Dives died, and was tormented. When the Saints are absent from the body, they are present with the Lord. But when the spirit again assumes the body, the felicity of the saint, and the misery of the sinner, will be more complete.

3. As the *precise nature of the intermediate state*, between the death of the body and the resurrection, has been

a subject of debate among the most learned and pious divines, in all ages ; so is it another question, not altogether settled, Whether the Saints, after the resurrection, and judgment, are to enter into the supreme Heaven of Heavens, *already* created ; or to inhabit the New Heavens and the New Earth, which are *to be* created, after this earth is burnt up ? Behold, says God, speaking by his prophet Isaiah, I create new heavens, and a new earth ; and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. And again, in another chapter, For as the new heavens, and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the Lord ; so shall your seed, and your name, remain. St Peter says, Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. And in the Revelation of St John, we read, And I saw a new heaven, and a new earth, that is, *after the judgment*, for the first heaven, and the first earth, were passed away : And He, that sat on the throne, said, Behold, I make all things new. Some of the above passages are perhaps only figurative ; while others appear designed to be understood literally. St Peter teaches us, that the things shaken, and removed by the conflagration, are destroyed, *to make way for* a new creation. From the declarations of Scripture, 'it is obvious, says President Dwight, that such a change will hereafter take place in the creation of God, as will in the proper sense verify this prediction.' Again, 'The first heaven and the first earth were intended to be the theatre of temporary scenes ; and when these are finished, are declared to pass away. The new heaven and the new earth are destined to eternal purposes ; and are therefore formed to endure forever.' The new creation, which is designed to be the residence of angels and redeemed men, will perhaps resemble what this world would have been, if Adam had not fallen. In it, 'the air, the trees, the streams, the fruits, will all be informed with life. This divine principle in the glorified bodies of the blessed, will warm the heart, kindle the eye, and play around the aspect with youth and immortality.' In fine, Christ will be the light, and the joy of this fresh, and blessed Paradise of God, the New Jerusalem.

Thus have I briefly alluded to ~~two~~ interesting events, the one immediately *preceding*, the other immediately *succeeding*, the final judgment ; and both of which, if not strictly, were yet naturally connected with the great theme of the future Resurrection of the Body. It is now time, to come to a brief, but more practical

#### APPLICATION.

1. The Resurrection of the Body is not a doctrine of Philosophy ; it is a doctrine of Revelation. We should thank God for that. This great event is to be brought about by *that mighty working*, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself. It is God alone, who can say to these dry bones, *Live*. It is God in Christ alone, who can say to the grave, *Lazarus, come forth*. In view of such power, how does poor mortality shrink almost into its original nothingness.

2. In whatever place, or state, the soul may have existed previous to the resurrection ; in whatever sense may be understood *the place of departed spirits* ; or unto whatever place, or state, it may be destined, after the resurrection of the body, whether in the already existing supreme Heavens, or in the new created Heavens and Earth ; is of little consequence, provided it has been, and is to be, in a place, and state of happiness ; provided it died in the body, so as to be prepared to hear the last trump of the Archangel ; for the trumpet will sound, *Come to Judgment* ; and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

3. Do you ask, what it is to be prepared to meet this great change ? Let the Saviour himself answer : 'The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have *done good*, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have *done evil*, unto the resurrection of damnation.' How simple, and yet how full, is this declaration ; how comforting to the Christian, how appalling to the sinner. The Saviour does not say, those that have the most learning, that own the largest estates, that sit in the highest office ;

nor does he say, those that worship in any particular church, talk much of their humility, or make long prayers for the destitute. Ah no. He says, they that have *done good*. Activity in religion is demanded. Practice is to be the evidence of the sincerity of the profession. A correct creed is nothing. Crying, Lord, Lord, is nothing. *Doing good* is every thing. Faith without works is dead. Hear this, ye that do good, and rejoice ; ye that do good, according to your power, to your families, your relations, your neighbours, your townsmen, your country, and also to your enemies ; and ye, who, if you can do no good, take heed to do no harm ; hear this, and be comforted ; for you shall come forth unto the resurrection of life. And, on the other hand, hear this, ye that *do evil*, and tremble ; for the Lord from Heaven hath said, you shall come forth unto the resurrection of damnation.

4. Finally, When we consider, that in Heaven are many mansions, that one star will differ from another star in celestial glory, let us all endeavour, by lives of christian purity and activity, to obtain as high a mansion, and as high a degree of glory, as we can. And then, if we *know each other* at the resurrection, as there is reason to believe we shall, we shall rejoice with joy unspeakable, to meet our dear relatives, and friends, in our spiritual bodies ; and go to live with them in a blessed world, full of holy spirits who have never sinned. and holy saints who are redeemed from sin ; where, with Christ for our light, and our life, we shall enjoy perpetual youth, perpetual peace, and perpetual love. It almost draws out the sting of dying, to think of friends meeting again after death, in a world of bliss, no more to part. Let us then strive so to live, that we shall not fear to hear the *last trump* ; when our bodies shall rise with the rising universe ; and this *mortal shall put on immortality*.

# COUNSEL TO CHILDREN.

## SERMON LI.

*Psalm xxxiv, 11.*—COME, YE CHILDREN, HEARKEN UNTO ME : I WILL TEACH YOU THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

IN THE United States, are supposed to be above three millions of Children. These, in the course of nature, are to become the living agents in the destinies of the country. When grown, they are to step forward into active life, to sway in the senate, and to minister at the altar ; to be learned advocates, and alert physicians ; some to become magistrates, some guardians of the public revenue, some to decide between peace and war ; others to be foreign merchants, others domestic planters, and nearly all to be members of parishes, and masters and mistresses of families yet unborn. How important is it then, that the minds of these children be early imbued with christian principles. We are not so anxious, that children should become what the world calls great, as that they should be good children, and become good men, like youthful Abel and Isaac, Joseph and Samuel, David and Josiah, and Timothy ; and, above all, harmless and undefiled, like the holy child Jesus.

My young Brothers. When you walk down, and stand by the margin of a clear pool, and drop a pebble into its smooth surface, you behold the little rings of agitated water, circle after circle, spreading and spreading, wider and wider, from the moving centre, over the bosom of the before serene pool. In like manner, will each one of you, if your lives are spared, become the centre of a

circle, and such will be your spreading influence over that circle. We wish that to be a good influence.

My young Sisters. When you walk out into the fields, in summer, you behold the flowers and the weeds springing around you ; and you observe how far more beautiful and desirable is the fragrant flower, than the noisome weed. In like manner, will each one of you bloom into a lovely flower, or rise into an ungrateful weed, to choke the flowers. We wish you all to become roses of Sharon, and lilies of the valley.

Thus may Children learn a beautiful moral lesson from Nature. But lessons of a more direct, and peculiarly religious bias, must be taught from Revelation. The good Shepherd of the flock must not neglect to feed the lambs of the fold. *Come then, ye Children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the Lord.*

1. While young, *Please your Parents.* Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honour thy father with thy heart, and forget not the sorrows of thy mother ; how canst thou recompense them the things, that they have done for thee ? You know not the debt of gratitude you owe to those, who have watched over your infant years with unabating solicitude ; nor how much they have done for you, when you were not able to do any thing for yourselves. You know not how much care they have bestowed for your comfort ; to clothe, to feed, and to shelter you ; to send you to school ; and to heal you in sickness. Your parents and guardians know, from age and experience, better than you can know, what will promote your good. To point out your duties, you must look to them ; to fulfil these duties, they must look to you. If you are not obedient when young, it is almost certain, you will never be. Your habits of disobedience will become more fixed, and your young hearts will grow harder and harder, as you grow older. But it was once said, the eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it. Disappoint not then the hopes of your parents ; but strive to repay their affec-

tion, by a strict compliance with their will. Wound not their feelings by hesitancy, or distrust. If you ever have deceived them, seek to be forgiven, and do not so again. Think of the youthful Jesus, how he went down with his parents, and how long, and how cheerfully, he was subject unto them. And, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. So shall you make glad your parents' souls within them. They will shed tears of pious joy, at finding you the object of their desires. They will wear you next their heart. So shalt thou be as the son of the Most High, and he shall love thee, more than thy mother doth.

2. While young, *Love your School*. Youth is the time, and the school is a place, for you to imbibe good principles. It is a great privilege to be allowed to go to school. The wisest men went to school, when little boys. And you should be thankful, that you have better schools in your day, than your parents had in their day. But without your own endeavours, books and teachers will avail nothing. Your teachers can but point out the path, your own feet must walk in it. Unless you will bow your own necks to drink of the life-giving stream, the fountain is opened in vain. You should never esteem it a task, but a pleasure ; not a duty only, but a privilege ; to learn, what will make you better children, and better men and women. You cannot be young but once. Good images may now be impressed upon your yielding minds, as the motto of the signet is sealed upon the sealing-wax. Remember, that any useful truth learnt by, and for yourselves, is better than many learnt for you by others. And that the quantity is of less importance, than the quality of what you acquire. Burthen not the memory to the prejudice of the judgment. It is of little use for the tongue to utter, what the head does not comprehend. Ask not yourselves, how much you recollect, but how much you understand ; and when you understand, how much you strive to practise it.

When at school, always appear neat in your persons, and your apparel, which is a virtue you owe to yourselves, and others. A bright face can best reflect a bright mind. And not only should you be, at all times, respectful and confiding towards your instructors ; but you should also

be ever pleasant and obliging to your schoolmates. Let all evil speaking be put away from you. Say not, I will do so to him, as he hath done to me. A soft answer turneth away wrath. In short, you must never envy, nor hate, nor be cruel to your playmates ; you must never use bad words, nor tell tales, nor mimic each other's defects ; you must never be quarrelsome, nor deceitful, nor idle ; but you must be studious, and modest, and mannerly ; and complaisant to every body. In these things, do not deprive your parents, and your teachers, of their pleasing anticipations, as your compliance is all the reward they ask of you. Your own reward, and you need wish for no other, will be your temporal, and eternal benefit. Then be not discouraged. You are toiling, not for others, but for yourselves. Learn even but one good thing on every day, and you will learn three hundred and sixty-five good things in the year. Thus, day by day, will you grow richer and richer ; and no man can take such riches from you.

3. While young, *Study your Bibles*. The Bible, in some parts of it, is the oldest book in the world. It is not only the Word of God, but it is full of the most wonderful stories ; such as will not only inform, but entertain you. These stories were all written by Holy Men for our instruction. They teach, how God took care of good men, and left bad men to suffer, in the days of old. In this Book, you will learn how the World was created, by the Spirit of God moving upon the face of the waters. Here you may read of Adam and Eve, the parents of all nations, who for disobedience were obliged to leave their happy garden, for a world of thorns and thistles. Of envious Cain, who rose up and killed his pious brother Abel, for which he was sent out to be a vagabond among men. Of good Enoch, who so walked with God on the earth, that he was early taken up alive into heaven. Of righteous Noah, riding safely in his ark over the drowning waters of an ungodly world. Of the tall Tower on the plain of Shinar, by which the impious builders hoped to be able to climb into heaven. Of good old Abraham, who was ordered to slay his only son for a sacrifice ; and whose uplifted hand was stayed by an angel, when his faith was



proved. Of Lot's worldly wife, who was turned into a pillar of salt, for looking back toward the burning Cities of the Plain, which she was warned not to do. Here you may read, the affecting story of youthful Joseph, with his coat of many colours; and of his successive trials, and temptations, and triumphs. Of the babe Moses, who was exposed by his own believing mother in a bulrush-ark, by the river's brink; and who, when grown, and destined to be the great deliverer of his brethren, was called to talk with God in the bush that burned, and was not consumed. Of haughty Pharaoh, and the ten plagues sent by God to turn his hardened heart. Of the stiff-neckedness, and forty years of wonders, of the Wanderers in the Wilderness. Of the dumb ass reproving blinded Balaam for beating her, when the opposing angel stood in the narrow path, between the walls of the vineyards. Of Samson, the strongest man that ever lived, but overcome by a harlot; and whose strength lay in his hair. Of the strippling David, who challenged and slew the great giant Goliath, with his simple sling, and a smooth pebble out of the brook; because he did it in the strength of the Lord. Of the frightful and frightened Witch of Endor, who was permitted to bring up the dead Samuel before the living Saul. Of handsome, but rebellious Absalom, who stole away the hearts of the people from his own doating father, the king; and afterwards, in his flight, was hung by his long and beautiful hair, as he rode under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his mule went from under him. Of king Solomon in all his glory, and the famous Queen of the South, who came a far journey to see his treasures; all of which he soon found to be but vanity. Here also may you read, of holy Elijah, who was taken up, in a chariot of fire, by a whirlwind into heaven. And of holy Elisha, who, when mocked by some little wicked children, had sent him by the Lord two she-bears out of the wood, which tare forty and two of them in pieces. Of mourning Jeremiah, who was drawn up unhurt, by cords put under his armholes, out of the dungeon in which he had sunk in the mire. And of praying Daniel, who was preserved untouched in the lions' den. Of the Three Servants of the Most High, who walked unsinged in the midst of the

burning fiery furnace, neither did the smell of fire pass on them. Of the simple gleaner Ruth, in the country; and the orphan niece Esther, in the city; both of whom the Lord blessed, and exalted, for their pious gratitude. Also, of enduring Job, who was long sifted by Satan, but whose end was happier than his beginning. And of repining Jonah, who was doomed for disobedience to be swallowed up alive by a monster in the sea. But enough. Think no more, that the Bible is a dull book. Surely, no book is so full of impressive, and improving stories, as the older half of the Bible.

And, in the Holy Gospels, you may read of the sublime birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension to glory, of the blessed Saviour of mankind. And at the end of the book, you may view the dazzling splendours of the New Jerusalem, which is descending out of heaven from God, to receive all good people, when they leave this sinful world.

But, the Holy Bible is not all stories. In it, there are many happy promises to the good, and awful threatenings to the evil; and much counsel for persons of every age. Especially, there is the Moral Law, which is very plain, and which God wrote with his own finger, on the stone tables, in the burning Mountain. This you can easily understand, and this you should, each of you, learn by heart, and try to follow. This tells you, that you must love God, and him only must you serve. This says, Little children, keep yourselves from idols. This says, speak no wicked words. This commands you, to keep holy the sabbath day. To respect your parents. Never to be cruel, or to kill even little animals, when they do no harm. Always to be modest in your behaviour. Never to take any thing that is not your own. Never to tell wrong stories about your neighbours. And never to wish you had other people's good things, if God has not seen fit to send you the like. Let it then be said of you, as it was said to young Timothy: And that from a child, thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

4. While young, *Cherish personal Religion.* Come, ye Children, hearken unto me : I will teach you the fear of the Lord. The holy child Jesus began *very early* to be about his heavenly Father's business. And think of the child Samuel, who, at *four years old*, laying aside his little coat, and girding on his linen ephod, ministered before the Lord. And of young Josiah, who, at *eight years old*, began to do that which was right in the sight of the Lord. Although so young, yet you, like them, have each a soul to save. Therefore, in order to become religious children, delight to converse with good people, about good things. Especially, come constantly to the House of the Lord, on the Holy Sabbath. And while in the Lord's House, always sit still, and be solemn, and attentive. Consider also, that it is sinful to hear your duty taught, without wishing to practise it. Without religion, childhood and youth are vanity. Without religion, you will be in a more perilous state, than the animals around you. It is also easier to seek the Lord betimes. Seek me early, and ye shall find me. Say not, we will become religious in some future year, or in old age. Remember now thy Creator, in the days of thy youth. Religion will render you more loving brothers and sisters, more grateful and agreeable sons and daughters, and more useful men and women, if you live to ripen in years. For the mercy of the Lord is forever upon them that fear him; and his righteousness unto children's children. For he said, surely they are my people, children that will not lie; so he was their Saviour. God, says Jesus, careth for little sparrows, and do you not think he will care for you? Jesus loved little children. He once called a little child, and when he had set him in the midst, he told his disciples, that unless they became as little children, they could not enter into the kingdom of heaven. But do you not think, that the child which he called, was a good little child? Jesus loved little children, and took them up in his arms, and blessed them. Suffer little children, he said, to come unto me, and forbid them not. Will you not then go unto him? If ye thus do, your reward shall be great, and ye shall be children of the Highest.

Dear Children. You have often been told, that we

are all sinners, however young. And because of this, cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. God is angry with the wicked every day. God cannot be your friend, even in this world, unless you will be his friends ; and that you can never be, if you do any sin, and do not repent of it. Therefore, said that youngest apostle, whom the Lord loved best, My little children, for he called all his converts little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And now, little children, abide in him, that is, in the Lord ; that when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him, at his coming. Then, sin no more, and God will forgive you. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. He will say, Is he my dear son ? Is he a pleasant child ? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still.

We cannot love any object truly, until we are acquainted with that object. And the more we know of that object, if it be congenial to our desires, the more we shall love it. Therefore should children often think about, and ask of their parents concerning the Creator, and the Saviour. And the more they know of these in youth, the better will their minds be prepared to comprehend, and enjoy their glorious and gracious characters, when they contemplate them in another world. Now, dear children, Whose are you ? Who is your Maker ? And do you owe your Maker nothing ? Who has preserved your health ? And do you owe your Preserver nothing ? Who has daily fed and clothed you ? And do you owe your Benefactor nothing ? Who has shed his blood for you ? And do you owe your Redeemer nothing ? I know your hearts are young and tender. I know you cannot turn away, and forget so kind a Friend. I feel that you will come, and give up the freshness of your lives to this good Saviour.

For this end, you must not neglect your prayers. Often, in secret, kneel down before the Lord your Maker. Never let a morning rise, nor an evening set, without witnessing your youthful prayers and praises. Pray to God, that as you live upon his bounty, so you may live to his

glory. That while he is feeding your bodies with temporal food, he would feed your souls with spiritual food. And that his daily goodness to you, may lead you to daily resolutions to love and serve him. Above all, pray that you may be led to choose that good part, which shall never be taken away from you. A wicked little child, if he should be called to die, and many are called as young as any of you, cannot go to heaven ; for heaven is filled with good beings, and not one wicked one among them. But in your heavenly Father's house are many mansions, and some for little children. I ask then, have you been children that would, or would not, hear the law of the Lord ? Reflect, that God could strike you dead in an instant. Every day he says, Return, ye children of men. Walk into the church-yard, and you see there graves of all lengths. All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone ; and the place thereof shall know it no more. Be thankful then, that you are in health, while others are sick ; that you are alive, while others are dead. Be then children of light ; children of promise. Then will you receive the prayers of faithful ministers, that ye may be perfected in every good word and work ; and the blessing of your parents and friends will go with you. Then will your souls, together with your bodies, grow up in comeliness before the Lord. O God, be thou the guide of their inexperienced feet !

I cannot conclude this *Counsel to Children*, without a word to *Parents, Guardians, and Teachers*.

1. *Ye Fathers*, provoke not your children to wrath ; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Their tender minds are now, comparatively, like unsullied sheets of paper, and it is all important what characters you write upon them. Let then your as yet innocent children ever have good counsel confirmed to them by good example at home. Thus alone can you repay to your own children, the deep debt you owe to your own virtuous parents. And, *ye Mothers*, unto you is

usually confided the agreeable, but very arduous and responsible task of drawing forth the first faculties of your offspring, and instilling into their opening minds the first principles of action. You are their first, and often their only teachers. How necessary is it, therefore, that their first, be virtuous and religious principles. And how requisite, that ye teach these to your children ; speaking of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. From the trials and temptations of life, which will await children after they have left home, parents cannot guard them ; but they can fortify their minds to meet and withstand them. Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it. The just man walketh in his integrity ; his children are blessed after him. A child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. Parental admonition should be adapted to the disposition of the child. Ill conduct in the child, not ill humour in the parent, should be the cause of correction. Parents should avoid the extremes of impatient severity, and misguided indulgence. Choose rather, to lay aside the lash of fear, and to draw with the cords of love. And, my son, despise not thou the chastening of thy father, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. So shall the Lord turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to the fathers. For the promise is unto you, ye parents, and to your children. Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord. Children's children are the crown of old men ; and the glory of children are their fathers. If you give good instruction to your offspring, you will have little cause to fear this reflection : I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. This would be the most grievous calamity, that could befall a parent. This would bow down both body and soul with a burden of anguish. On the contrary, your labour will not be in vain. The fragrant blossoms of promise will bring forth fruits of reward. Your little ones will spring up like olive plants about your table. Ye mothers shall each be a joyful mother of children. And ye fathers shall exclaim, Behold I, and the children which God hath given me.

2. And, ye *Parents and Guardians*, take heed that your children and wards may become, not only virtuous, but religious. What the *Schools of the Prophets* were of old to men, *Sabbath Schools* are now to children. In the former, ministers were taught, and in the latter, children learn, the mysteries of godliness. Sabbath Schools, those heaven-suggested assemblies, those miniature ministries, are designed as helpmeets to the instructions of the parent, the guardian, and the minister. Preaching is to reform souls from sin ; sabbath schools to fortify them against sinning. Preaching is addressed to habits already formed, and difficult to be changed ; sabbath schools endeavour to mould the habits as they appear, and while they are easily turned. Here are instilled into the tender minds of children the divine precepts of the gospel. Here they are prepared for a life of virtue and piety ; and have the religious admonitions of home strengthened and extended. In youth, the memory is tenacious of its impressions. How behooing then, that these impressions be good. Here the attention of children is excited by the hour, the place, the teachers, and the large number of their own age engaged in the same studies. Here no one can interrupt, nor be interrupted. Besides, if sabbath schools do no positive good, they prevent much evil, which is in fact doing much good. Many children will not attend church, unless led thither by their teachers ; but will profane the sabbath by mischievous idleness, and training about the streets. Upon mothers therefore, who are tenderly alive to the happiness of their offspring, and upon whom their religious education so mainly devolves, is the value of sabbath schools particularly urged. They are important also to parents, who regard their own future comfort. When in years, or feeble and sick, they will need the succour and consolation of obedient, grateful children. Are not children more likely to be such, when early imbued with religious instruction ? And how like a dagger in their bosoms, if their children prove thankless and corrupt, through their unnatural neglect. For, we ask with pain, even if parents and guardians are qualified to instruct at home, do they always do it ? And if willing, are not they, and their little ones, liable to be called away,

or disturbed by company ? But the utility of sabbath schools is, we allow, of primary, and indeed inestimable application, to those children, who are left uncultured at home, to grow up, like noxious weeds, and poison all around them.

3. And, ye *Teachers*, be not weary in well-doing, for in due time ye shall reap, if ye faint not. There is no way, perhaps, in which females, especially, can do so much for religion, as by becoming teachers in sabbath schools. They are forbidden to preach ; but by the examples of *Lois*, and *Eunice*, and *Priscilla*, and others, they are encouraged to render private instruction. And though, what you do, the children know not fully now, yet shall they know hereafter. And even the teachers themselves, and many parents at home, have been led into serious reflection, by the exercises at school, and the visible change wrought upon the children. It is to the honour of the female sex, that so many have come forward in this heavenly duty. They are fitted by nature for it, and the cause may be safely committed into their hands. Go on, ye *Teachers*, in the good work. Like *Tryphena*, and *Tryphosa*, go on, and labour in the Lord. In my soul, I bid you, God speed. You give your time, which is more precious than money ; but you give it for souls, which are more precious than time. You will find a reward in your own bosoms. Continue to sow in hope. You may gather the fruit in another world. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name, receiveth me. Inasmuch — delightful words — inasmuch as thou didst it unto the least of these, thou didst it unto me. Go on then, ye *Christian Pioneers*, both male and female, and be numbered among those, who have turned many to righteousness.

4. And now, in parting, I turn once more unto you, ye *Children*. I have told you that, while young, you must *please your parents* ; that you must *love your school* ; that you must *study your bibles* ; and that you must *cherish personal religion*. I have told you, what you must do, and what you must not do. And now, as you increase in stature, may you increase in favour with



God and man. May you be spotless as the snows, pure as the dews, of heaven. May it be said of you, Many sons and daughters have done virtuously, but ye have excelled them all. May you live long, to gladden the declining years of your parents ; and, at last, rise on angels' wings into undying glory. *Farewell now, ye Children, who have hearkened unto me : I have endeavoured to teach you the fear of the Lord.*

## SHORTNESS OF TIME.

### SERMON LII.

1 Cor. vii, 29. — BRETHREN, THE TIME IS SHORT.

THIS concise, but emphatic, and solemn declaration of the faithful preacher Paul to his brethren, remains, as applied to us, equally true ; and may lead us to ponder a while upon the obvious, but unheeded truth, that the time of man on earth is short ; and suggest the wisdom, therefore, of devoting it to Virtue and Religion.

#### I. THE TIME OF MAN ON EARTH IS SHORT.

All *History*, and all *Nature*, are a solemn paraphrase on this truth. This World has ever been a World of Graves. Where now are they, who built those vast cities of old, Babylon and Nineveh ? Where are they, who reared that Tower, whose top might reach unto heaven ? Where are they, who since founded those stupendous piles on the plains of Egypt, that threaten to outbrave time ? Their bodies crumbled into dust ; their souls gone to Judgment. The Antediluvians, they lived several hundreds of ages ; but the close of their story is — they died. The wide surface of the earth is hallowed with mortal ashes. The ships of the ocean sail over floating corpses. The miner turns up human bones with his mattock. In every town, we note a grave-yard. Each weekly paper has its square for the dead. Our carriages are sometimes turned out of the way by the slowly-coming hearse. Day after day, the tolling bell tells of a passed, or a passing soul.

In the *Book of Providence*, and the *Book of Inspiration*, the Ancient of Days warneth us, that the time of man on earth is short; and yet we regard it not. One of the three things never satisfied is the grave. We often seek the living among the dead. Man lieth down, and riseth not, till the heavens be no more; they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep. His sons come to honour, and he knoweth it not; they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them. Both the seasons, and the reasons, of our deaths, are secret. Each hour has its changes, which we call chances; for we look not beyond the visible effect, to the invisible Cause. When they shall say, Peace and Safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them; they shall not escape in all the plain. To the infant in the cradle, that has just begun to distinguish its mother by her smiles; to the youth, who boasts of the vigour of health, and the pride of strength; to the man of middle life, whose natural energies are yet unabated, but who hath gray hairs here and there upon him, yet knoweth it not; time is but a reprieve from the sentence of death. To the man of feeble knees, and quivering voice, who hath passed his allotted term; time is nothing at all—he is already dying. Surely, every man walketh in a vain show; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them. Go to now, ye that say, to-day, or to-morrow, we will go into such a city, and continue there a year; and buy, and sell, and get gain; whereas, ye know not what shall be on the morrow. Death, says the proverb, stands behind the back of a young man, but before the face of an old man. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker of usury, so with the giver of usury to him. Each year, God hands to his grim messenger the long black-sealed roll, of those marked out to die. He saith, Go, take that good man away from the evil to come. Go, cut down that aged sinner, who cumbers the ground. Death walks near each of our doors, and overpasses those only, whom the angel of mercy has reprieved for one term longer of

probation. All here are sojourners in a strange land; both the judge, and the prudent; the ancient, and the honourable man; the counsellor, and the eloquent orator. What flattery has ever soothed the dull cold ear of death? Even the paths of glory have led but to the grave. Those who have been worshipped as gods, have died like men. The mounting, and glowing spark of ambition has gone out, and fallen into the heap of common ashes. Our life is in our nostrils. Health and ease are variable as the weather. Danger prowleth at midnight, and pestilence wasteth at noonday. If accident do not cast us out of the world, nature herself soon will. Our shattered bodies will become unfit for the soul to live in. We shall be as a dead man, out of mind. Even to those, who lived the lives of the patriarchs, their years, when they were past, seemed evil and few. Said aged Jacob to the inquiring king of Egypt: The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years of my pilgrimage been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage. In our times, our lives are dwindled to a shorter span. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. When we reflect on such truths, 'How low, how little are the proud; how indigent the great.'

I have not thus dwelt upon this affecting topic, because it required discussion, or was not universally self-evident to the understanding. But although a truth of infinite moment, it is generally overlooked by a thoughtless world; and demands to be often recalled, and re-impressed upon the heart. It is a consolation, however, that the shortness of life; and especially the deaths of so many infants; with the trials of the good, and the forbearance towards the evil; independent of Revelation, give strong assurance of a retributory world.

## II. THE WISDOM, THEREFORE, OF DEVOTING OUR TIME TO VIRTUE AND RELIGION.

If man knoweth not his time, how hazardous to presume on one day. Seeing then, that these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be, in all holy conversation and godliness. How should we watch, lest Judgment should be turned away backward, and Justice stand afar off; lest Truth should be suffered to fall in the streets, or Equity be refused to enter. Not only Inspiration, but Italian and Spanish wisdom teaches us: That mercy and goodness alone make us like to God; and the best thing in this world is to live above it. That while it is more painful to do nothing, than to do something; God's providence is the surest and best inheritance; and virtue is the best patrimony for children. That, heaven once named, all other things are trifles; therefore, in every work we should begin and end with God. That the love of God prevails forever; all other things come to nothing. That the truest content is that, of which no man can deprive us; and the short and sure way to reputation is, to take care to be in truth, what we would have others think us to be. That a man is valued as he makes himself valuable; and no man knows more to any good purpose than he practises. That all vice infatuates and corrupts the judgment; and every sin brings its punishment along with it. That there is a much shorter pass from virtue to vice, than from vice to virtue; yet things are so ordered, that a man must take more pains to perish, than to be happy. That he who lives disorderly one year, does not enjoy himself for many years after. That he is unhappy, who wishes to die; but more so, he who fears it; and the more we think of dying, the better we shall live. That happy is he, who knows his follies in his youth; who reproves others, but corrects himself. That the knowledge of God, and of ourselves, is the mother of true devotion, and the perfection of wisdom. That he who amends his faults puts himself under God's protection; and the best and noblest conquest is that of a man's own reason over his passions and follies. Then should we not be over-joyful in prosperity, nor over-anxious in adversity. We should enjoy cheerfully, what we obtain

honestly. If we possess internal endowments, which fit us for private life, how should we hold them in all usefulness and sobriety. If we possess an eminency of them, which fits us for public stations, how should we minister as those, who must give an account. If earthly enjoyments do not soon leave us, we shall soon quit them. For the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever. Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment. It is a fearful thing, to fall into the hands of the living God.

The true definition of time is, a term given for repentance. We are ever murmuring that our days are so limited, and yet we act as though they would never end. We waste life, in doing what we ought not, or in doing little that we ought to do. 'How many of us do good to those who affront us; overcome evil with good; turn the face again, rather than be revenged; and lose our interest rather than our charity? for by these precepts we shall be judged.' Many hope all is well with them, if they refrain from civil, penal crimes, such as have a name in the laws; but that secret sins, crafty cozenage and malicious lawsuits, revelling and petty spites, and rudeness, and pride, and lying, and churlishness, will be winked at. If every idle word shall be brought into judgment, what shall those answer, who corrupt justice, and pervert innocence; who preach evil doctrines, or declare perverse sentences? We call ourselves Christians, and we defame our Lord; we call men brothers, and we oppress one another. Man destroys his neighbour, and makes the poor fear him, and builds up new religions, and confounds the old, and lets the trivial affairs of the world take up so much of his time, that little is left for piety. 'All this while, God is silent, except by his Word, and our conscience.' But soon, God will speak, and no man shall answer. What profit will you then have of those things, of which you should now be ashamed? However well you may have improved your time in temporal pursuits, all is mispent, unless you have gained the one thing needful. Every man that lives

wickedly disgraces his nature. Every professor, especially, that is a hypocrite, or a backslider, strikes a blow at the church. 'He discourages strangers from entering into it, he cools the hearts of them that are in already, and makes the adversaries speak reproachfully of the name of its divine Founder.' He is treasuring up wrath for his soul against the day of wrath; for to be carnally minded is death. O that people were wise, that they would consider their latter end. 'He that accuses himself of his crimes here, means to forsake them; he looks well upon them on all sides, and spies out his deformity, and is taught to hate them; and by making shame the instrument of repentance, he takes away the sting, and makes that his medicine, which would otherwise be his death.' The way to be prepared for futurity is not to endeavour to forget it; but to retire from the crowd, and patiently, and repeatedly, to meditate upon death. To fortify the soul against all gloomy presages, we must secure to ourselves the protection of the great Disposer of Events. We must struggle particularly against our easily besetting sins. While we are trifling, and proud, and merry, all is serious around us. God, the Saviour, the Bible, Creation, all are serious. These monitions are not designed to wound or depress your minds; but, on the contrary, to prevent future remorse. First follies are not unpardonable, but may be redeemed; the second are hazardous; and the third more fatal; but nothing is absolutely hopeless, but a perseverance in irreligion. Therefore, let the time past of our lives suffice, and more than suffice, in which to have wrought the will of the flesh. 'While the tremendous realities of the eternal world are out of view, unthought of, and disregarded; as alas, they generally are by the most of mankind; what mighty things in their esteem are the relations, the joys and sorrows, the possessions and bereavements, the acquisitions and pursuits, of this life. How do they engross our anxious thoughts and cares, and exhaust our strength and spirits.' How do they draw us from the daily duties of religion; from solemn reflection and discourse, from reading useful books, from advising the ignorant, relieving the needy, and comforting the afflicted. The virtuous mind turns

with distaste from the impure pleasures of the world, and finds delightful employment for its secret hours, in holding communion with its Creator. The humble Christian, although forsaken by earthly comforters, can find a welcome refuge with his heavenly Friend.

All earthly joys are but a feverish, incoherent reverie. The fascinating pageantry of human scenes will vanish like a vain show. The memory of man passeth away, as the remembrance of a guest, that tarrieth but one day. 'Every hour carries us nearer to the fragrant atmosphere of angels, or to the pestilential vapours of demons.' It remaineth, that both they that have wives, be 'as though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not ; and they that rejoice, as though they rejoiced not ; and they that buy, as though they possessed not ; and they that use this world, as not abusing it. It will soon be found, that men are not wits for talking deistically, nor valiant for being tyrannical, nor wise for circumventing ; that wealth is not the greatest fortune, that pride is an ill counsellor, and that to persecute even in a good cause is no piety. It is, comparatively, of little moment, whether our lives be longer or shorter ; but all-important, that we make a good use of our time. For honourable age is not that, which standeth in length of time, or is measured by number of years ; but wisdom is the gray hair to man, and an unspotted life is old age. Good men are sometimes taken away speedily, lest that wickedness should alter their understanding, or deceit beguile their souls. The shortness of our troubles here, should make them more tolerable ; knowing that here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. We should work while the day lasts ; for the night cometh, wherein no man can work. For there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, whither we are hastening. 'Those of our friends, who have gone before us, now know by a woful, or blissful experience, the worth of time ; the incalculable value of every hour to a soul on probation. But our business is not with the dead, but the living.' Heaven's prophets are sent to warn his people of their sins. Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm in my holy mountain. Cry aloud, and spare not ; lift up



thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgressions. For Zion's sake, I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake, I will not rest, until they turn to God. God himself calls, Unto you, O man, I call ; and my voice is unto the sons of men. Christ declares, Except ye repent, ye shall all perish. And will not man hear his Maker ? Will he not regard his Saviour ? Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this ; and, thou earth, be horribly afraid. Turn ye to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope. The angels, who kept not their first estate, are confined in chains of darkness, unto the judgment of the Great Day. But the children of man, who kept not his original purity, are allowed a short space for repentance.

Brethren, The time is short. So says Saint Paul. But we do not believe it. A messenger, we read in the Bible, was once sent to a man — This year thou shalt die. His message to each one of us is — This year thou mayest die. This year, though you are now in health and vigour ; though your house is half builded, or your field half planted ; or your ship not returned from sea ; though you have not yet quit school, or chosen your profession ; this year, though yet in your sins, you may die. How know we, that it may not be said to one of us, Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee. Then, whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided ? We think it not unlikely, that some one in the next street, or possibly in the next dwelling, or even in the next pew, may be called to die this year ; but we do not think it will be ourself. Each one has granted to himself a little longer time, not regarding his many sufficient warnings, until sickness has laid him very low. Then, like Felix, he may tremble. Or, like Agrippa, be persuaded to be almost a Christian. But when death hath gone his way for this time, he forgetteth him, who raised him up, and putteth off repentance, till a more convenient season. O the phrenzy of procrastination ! This season may never come. Now is the accepted time ; harden not your hearts. Now, before your countenance is changed ; before your joy is withered away ; before desire shall fail ; before your sun may go down while it is yet day ; now, before you are summoned to the bar of the God of the spirits of all flesh,

to render up your account. The longest life will come to an end, as surely as the shortest. The inhabitant of time will soon be the inhabitant of eternity. The pale congregation of the dead is ever beckoning us to come to them. In less than fourscore years, all, or nearly all of us, will be in an untried world. Life is short absolutely ; and, comparatively with eternity, it is not a wink of the eyelid, a pulse of the heart. 'Sin can put an end to our happiness, but not to our being. It were as hard to command ourselves into nothing, as to bring ourselves from nothing.' If we knew that this were the last day we should meet together in this House of the Lord, how would our hearts falter within us. How should we be sober, and watch unto prayer. How should we bereave ourselves of any earthly attachment, and cleave unto Him, who sticketh closer than a brother. How should we open our hearts to Him, who standeth without, and knocketh, till his head is filled with dew. We are ready to give our hearts to some fond object here below ; but how hard is it for us to give them unto God. But wo to those hearers, who hear only for others. And wo to those ministers, who listen not to themselves. To the good man, dying is disarmed of half its terrors. When the shadow of death is over his eyelids, he can say with holy confidence, Father, into thine hands, I commend my spirit. Or even with longing impatience, Even so, come, Lord Jesus ! And I heard a Voice from Heaven, saying, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord ; yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them. And the sooner they rest from their labours, the sooner will their happiness begin. But I would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep ; that ye sorrow not, even as others, which have no hope. For if ye believe that Jesus died, and rose again ; even so them also, *which sleep in Jesus*, will God bring with him. Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens, and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Blessed be God, 'that life is long, which answers life's great end.' Blessed be God, that though 'an angel's arm can't snatch us from the grave, legions of angels can't confine us there.' When the soul quits its mortal body,

it immediately passes into bliss, or misery ; there to remain, till the great decisive Day, when the justice of its sentence will be manifested before the assembled Universe.

In this World, we all live together, saints and sinners. But after death, there will be Two Worlds ; and between them will roll and roar an eternal, shoreless abyss, *without any bridge of connexion, or ark of rescue.*

# THE LAST JUDGMENT.

## SERMON LIII.

2 *Cor.* v, 10.—FOR WE MUST ALL APPEAR BEFORE THE  
JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST.

IT is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the Judgment. When this great, and terrible Day of the Lord, this Day, for which all other days were made, will come, knoweth no man, but the Father. It is necessary that such a day should be, wherein God may glorify his Justice, his Kindness, his Omniscience, his Power, and his Unchangeableness. That then, all the mysteries of his agency may be revealed, ‘all the evils of the world be amended, all the injustices be repaid, and divine Providence be vindicated.’ That God may appear just, when he judges; and clear, when he condemns. The design of a judicial process will be, not to inform the all-knowing Judge; but to convince all worlds of the equity of his proceedings, and the ground of their sentences. It is recorded that, as God, in the first judgment, destroyed the world by Water; so will he, after the Last Judgment, destroy it by Fire.

It is generally supposed that, as there were six days of creation, before the sabbath of rest; so will this world continue six thousand years in sin, and then will come the seventh thousand, a Millennium of Peace; and that, after that, there will be a short reign of the Man of Sin. That, during this reign of sin, passion and lust will triumph, as they did just before the ‘Deluge.’ And that, while Infidels blaspheme, and Scoffers exclaim, Where is

the promise of his coming ? then will the fearful and sublime Vision of Judgment begin to be realized. A part of the grand preparations for the Final Day will be, the speeding of the Angel, that is to fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to all Pagan nations ; and the collection and conversion of the scattered, and peeled, and deluded posterity of the ancient murderers of the Messiah.

From the goodness and equity of God, we may infer, that men will be judged by some universal rule, known to them ; as by the light of reason, or law of conscience ; not by the proportions of an angel, but by the measures of a man ; that those without the Law, will be judged without the Law ; and those under the Gospel, be judged by the Gospel. That we shall be judged, 'not by the errors of one day, but by the larger balance of our lives ; of single actions, if great and deliberate ; of little instances, if habitual ; by the plain rules of justice ; by the ten commandments ; by the first apprehensions of conscience, and the dictates of an honest mind ; that we shall be judged as Christians, rather than as men ; as persons to whom much is pardoned, and much is pitied.' This coming Judgment concerns all that have been born, are now born, or shall be born ; 'even you, and I, and all the world ; kings and priests, nobles and learned, the crafty and the easy, the wise and foolish, the rich and poor, the prevailing tyrant and the oppressed party.' Even the righteous, and most innocent, must pass through a severe trial.

My subject will lead me to treat, in their order, of the *Judge* ; the *Judgment-Seat* ; and the *Final Sentence* ; and to close with some *Warning Inferences*.

1. The Word of God not only declares that there will be a Judgment, but also sublimely intimates the manner of it ; and hath appointed the final Judge. The Judge is to be the King of Glory. And who is this King of Glory ? He, whom the great evangelical prophet so triumphantly foresaw : 'Who is he, that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah ? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength ?

I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat? I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people, there was none with me. For the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.' This is the King of Glory, who is to be Judge over both the quick, and the dead. God hath given assurance to all men, that he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained. The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son. God judges the secrets of men by Jesus Christ. Because he humbled himself, therefore God hath highly exalted him. No more the Babe in the Manger; no more the Culprit at the Bar; no more the Blasphemer on the Cross; He is to be the final Judge of this vast World of Sin. Partaking of both natures, the human and divine, he will be impartial, and thus consult the interest of both. Is it not a thought of insufferable anguish to sinners, that he who has been their Advocate all their lives, will then be their accuser; an injured person in the day of his power?

2. When that Day of Dread arrives, that awful Day, which will lay the hopes of the sinner in ruins, there shall be signs of alarm; the sun will become black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon be turned into blood, and the stars of heaven fall upon earth. O then, what appalling of the soul to those families, who have not called upon God's name. Men's hearts will quail with surprise and amazement. Each one will be a terror to himself, and to his friends. Fear will send faintness into their hearts, and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them. When they look on Ambition, they shall not lament, saying, Ah, his glory! or, Ah, Lord! When they look on Riches, they will exclaim, Miserable comforters are ye all! When they think on their sins, they will cry in despondency, O woe is me, for I am undone! Where now are their false gods? This is the time, when God shall destroy all the gods upon the earth. Bel boweth down; Nebo stoopeth; Dagon is tumbled in pieces before the Ark. Now, ye Deists, and Infidels, dispute the truth of religion. And I saw a mighty Angel come down from heaven, clothed with

a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of brass. And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot upon the earth, and cried with a loud voice. And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, he lift up his hand to heaven, and sware by Him, who created heaven, and the things that are therein ; and the earth, and the things that therein are ; and the sea, and things that are therein ; that — *Time should be no longer !*

Then shall burst upon the astonished soul an intense, and increasing light in mid-heaven. And the Son of man shall descend in clouds, and in great power, and in the glory of his Father ; with a shout, and with the voice of the Archangel, and all his holy angels with him. And the armies, which were in heaven, follow behind the great white throne, upon white horses, clothed in white linen, white and clean. And lo ! a great multitude, which no man can number, before the throne, in white robes, and palms in their hands. Thousand thousands minister unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stand before him. And there is a rainbow round about the throne, and out of the throne proceed lightnings, and thunders, and voices. The countenance of Him, that sitteth upon the throne of his glory, is as the sun shining in his strength ; having on his head many crowns, and clothed with a vesture dipped in blood. Out of his mouth goeth a sharp two-edged sword, and his voice is as the sound of many waters. In his right hand, he holdeth the keys of heaven, and of hell. And he hath on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written, King of kings ! and Lord of lords ! And round about the throne, all the angels stand, and fall on their faces, and worship, saying, Amen ! blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto Him, that sitteth upon the throne, forever and ever !

Then the trump of the Archangel shall sound ; as it once sounded on Sinai, when all the people that were in the camp trembled. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump — for the trumpet shall sound, Come to Judgment ! — will the dead arise. Prepare to meet

thy God. O what a dying day to the living ; what a living day to the dead. The graves over all the whole earth open. And can such dry bones live ? for they be very many, and very dry ? O Lord God, thou knowest. Again the trump of the Archangel sounds, Come, O Breath, from the four winds, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. And lo ! there is a noise and a shaking, and the bones come together, bone to his bone ; and the sinews, and the flesh, come upon them ; and the breath comes into them ; and they live, and they stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army. The dead, whose bodies have been mouldering in the sleep of ages, ever since the creation of man ; both small and great ; shall come forth, and stand before Christ, with Adam at their head. Lo ! armies of millions are bursting into life upon the spots where Nineveh and Babylon once stood. See gathering, Europeans and Asiatics, Americans and Africans ; Jews, Mahometans, Pagans, and Christians. See mingling the mighty Anakims, the giants of antiquity ; and little babes, which died upon their mother's breasts. The sea shall give up the dead, which are in it ; and death, and hell, shall deliver up the dead, which are in them ; and they shall be judged out of the things which are written, every man according to his works. The dead in Christ, the holy martyrs, the first fruits of the christian church, shall rise first ; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him, and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him ; and he shall separate one from another. Seated on his high irradiating throne, upheld by the wings of mighty cherubim, he shall send his angels, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. And those, who are alive, shall be caught up together with them, in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air ; because perhaps this globe could not hold the amazing assembly. The pulse of immortality begins to throb ; the soul is no longer incumbered, but assisted by its union to a spiritual body. How magnificently awful the scene ! The whole, vast, multitudinous congregation, of all kindreds and tongues, having dropped off these mortal bodies, rising like a dense cloud, full of mighty rushing wind ; and



separating, on the right hand, and on the left hand, to meet their everlasting doom. With thoughts all open, and hearts all naked, behold some exulting in triumph, and some shuddering in despair ; before the all-searching eye of Him, who sitteth upon the throne, and the witnessing of the holy angels. Behold, on the left hand of the Judge, endeavouring to hide from the face of divine justice — murderous Cain, and haughty Haman. See there, rich Dives, who had his good things on earth ; and see there, traitorous Judas, who sold his Lord for thirty pieces of silver. Look on the right hand of the Judge, up near to the throne — there behold, in that bright cloud of glory, the first youthful martyr Abel ; and Noah, the father of the second world. There walks faithful Mordecai, who wept at the king's gate ; and there reclines humble Lazarus, who ate the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table. In this vast multitude, we shall meet the 'neighbours of our dwelling, the relatives of our house, the sharer of our joys, and yesterday's bride, and the newborn heir, the priest of the family, and the honour of our kindred.' *There* stand aghast, the lukewarm lip-professor, and the procrastinating almost Christian. *There*, those who thought religion want of spirit, and reproof the minister's craft. *There*, will the sinner see 'that poor perishing soul, whom he has tempted to lewdness, or drunkenness, or perjury, by his loose discourse or deep dissembling, by scandal or a snare, by evil example or pernicious counsel, by malice or unwariness.' *Here* stand in hope, those who mourned over their sins, who made it their zealous, uniform endeavour to live soberly, and to warn sinners from the errors of their ways. Who shunned human vanities, and inhuman practices. *Here*, those whose generous projects were 'crushed in embryo, for want of power to execute them ;' or whose noble actions were shaded under modesty ; and whose characters never beamed in full beauty to mortal eyes.

3. The Books of God's Remembrance are opened — the Book of Life, and the Book of Death. On the one Roll, see the long black columns of sins, and underneath written — He that is unjust, let him be unjust still. On the other Roll, see the sins crossed out by the red lines

of pardon, and underneath written — He that is holy, let him be holy still. For God shall bring every work into judgment, every idle word which men shall speak, with every secret thing ; whether it be good, or whether it be evil. The Judge's eye is fixed on each one in particular ; it pierces through the naked breast into the heart shrinking with fearful tremblings: His voice is ' unlimited by the circles of air ;' and his ' countenance bespeaks him inexorable.' The mild, mediatorial hour is past. Justice must strike, and Mercy cannot withhold his hands. Sinners will have three sorts of accusers ; the Judge himself, whom they have rejected ; their own consciences, which they have injured ; and the devil, whom they have served. O then, when the sinner's heart is turned inside out, what hidden works of shame, dishonesty, treachery, and hypocrisy, will appear. Then will be produced, the disguise of lust, ' the malice of envy, the groans of the oppressed, the persecution of the saints, the cares of covetousness, the troubles of ambition, the insolences of traitors, the violences of rebels, the rage of anger, the uneasiness of impatience, and the restlessness of unlawful desires.' And then, will even the Christian's heart have to lament its ' follies and infirmities, the sins of youth and weakness of age, the imperfect grace and long omissions of duty, its scruples and fears, diffidences and pusillanimity, its evil intentions and little plots, its carnal confidences and too fond adherences to the world, its wilder joys and freer meals, its loss of time and too apt compliances, and little peevishnesses, its mixture of the world with things of the spirit, its breaches of promises, and breaking resolutions.' Then will it appear, who has feared God, and kept his commandments, which was the whole duty of man. Then shall be tried the thoughts and intents of the heart. Then will it be demanded, how we have heard ? and how we have believed ? Then will the pride of man be bowed down, and the haughtiness of man be laid low. For the Great Day of his Wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand ? Then will it be seen, who are clothed upon with the whole armour of God ; having their loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness, and their feet shod with the preparation of

the Gospel of peace. Above all, having the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God. Then will the raptures of the Redeemed, mingled with the songs of the first-born, echo to heaven—O Death! where is thy sting? O Grave! where is thy victory? The sting of Death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law; but, thanks be to God, who hath given us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ! To these, the Judge will say, Come, ye blessed of my Father! But, O the reverse! on the left hand. What a solemn, heart-rending separation of families. Of those, who on earth were confederate in the same fortunes, and interests, and actions. Of those, who walked arm in arm, with heart knit to heart. Of those, who were born twins of the same birth, one is taken, and the other left. What an eternal farewell, of father and mother, of sister and brother, of wives and children, of loving and beloved. There stand, with faces turned into paleness, in speechless, agonizing horror, those who on earth followed after the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, and the pride of life. They have leaned on a broken reed, whereon if a man lean, it will pierce his soul. They have sown the wind, and must reap the whirlwind. The Lord will sweep them with the besom of destruction. 'Their conscience re-echoes to the voice of the Judge, guilty! guilty!' Who shall acquit them, when self-condemned? If they are condemned by the Mediator, the Saviour, the Friend of Sinners, their condemnation must be just. Immortality is now a curse. No change, no gradation, but from wo to wo. On earth they cried, Crucify Him! Crucify Him! Now they cry in despair, Lord! Lord! To these, the Judge will say—O tremendous sound!—I know you not. Depart, ye cursed! Then the shouts of the holy orders of angels, and archangels, who have also been judged, echo, and re-echo, to heaven, and to hell. — Hell trembles! — Heaven rejoices!

When the Judgment is ended, Fire shall come down from the throne of God; the lower heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and pass away with a great noise; the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up. They

shall flee away from the face of Him, that sitteth on the throne, and there shall be found no place for them any more. O what a scene ! The World on Fire ! Conflagration ! and desolation ! and wo ! What ailest thou, O thou Sea, that thou fleest ? thou Jordan, that thou art driven back ? The everlasting mountains, Lebanon and Ararat, totter on their bases ! The modern Babylon is fallen ! is fallen ! that great city ! And I saw another Angel stand in the Sun. The stars fall from their orbits. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning. Planet rushes against planet. System against system. Piercing 'shrieks mingle with the trumpet of the Archangel, and with the thunders of the groaning heavens.' The flames catch the air, and the visible chaos above ; and the whole vast lower Universe crashes into one horrible Monument of Ruins !

While this World of Matter is on Fire, those, on the left hand of the Judgment-seat, will be conducted, by the Prince of the power of the air, with weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, down, through the devouring flames, to dwell forever with the Man of Perdition, and his accursed legions, in the World of Wo unutterable, where Hope can never enter. Ye blasting horrors, crush not on my soul !

Meanwhile, those, on the right hand of the Judgment-seat, will ascend with the Son of Man, with songs of praises, and triumphings, to be presented to the Father ; there forever to dwell with Holy Angels, and beatified spirits, in bliss unspeakable, which will never end, in the New Heavens and the New Earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. 'Visions of glory, spare my aching sight !'

Between these Two Worlds ; the World of Saints, and the World of Sinners — will be a Great Gulf fixed !

#### WARNING INFERENCES.

Is it not the extreme of amazement, that such truths do not make all our bones to shake, and the hair of our flesh to stand up ? That they do not arouse our sluggish hearts

from the death of sin, and the grave of inaction, to live watchfully and obediently, chastely and justly, humbly and devoutly, like persons who believe them? For, those ears, that now hear my voice, shall hear the trump of the Archangel; those eyes, which now see my face, shall behold the face of the Son of God. Though, after our death, worms destroy this body, yet in our flesh shall we see God; whom we shall see for ourselves, and these eyes shall behold him, and not another. Why doth not this subject affect us more? Why doth it not elate the righteous with joy unspeakable, and full of glory? And why doth not fearfulness surprise the hypocrite? 'Wherever the Gospel publishes the doctrine of a future judgment, there it requires all men to repent.' God now commandeth all men to repent, because he hath appointed a day for judging all men. Providence, reason, conscience, common-sense, and self-interest, all command, and implore you, to prepare to make your peace with God, and your own souls. For, repent we must, in time, or through eternity. Delaying reformation does not remove the necessity; but renders it more severe, and difficult. That which will excuse, or palliate the guilt of an African, or an Indian, in the great Day of Account, will not excuse us; for to whom much is given, of them will much be required.

To the Sinner, the Day of Judgment should be a thought of awful alarm. 'If there be need of much mercy to the servants and friends of the Judge, then his enemies shall not be able to stand upright in judgment.' The sinner need not wonder that God, who so loves mankind, should exact justice above mercy from him, when he has despised that, which God most loves, his Son; whose body he has crucified, whose purposes he has destroyed, whose honour he has disparaged, whose joys he has diminished, whose passion he has made ineffectual, and whose love he has trampled under impious feet. Let the sinner remember, that his impenitent life will bring him to an insufferable shame, in that Day of fearful scrutiny; and that his doom must be, pain above patience, sorrows without ease, amazement without resolution, sad remembrances, envy and confusion, and despair without hope, forever and ever.

But to the Christian, the Day of Judgment may be a reflection of rapturous triumph. For eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath laid up for them that love him. No matter what a Christian endures in this intermediate life; whether pain, or poverty, or bereavements; that Day will annihilate all, and recompense both the waiting, and the suffering. Christian! let your heart leap in anticipation of that Day; when you shall have trodden through the Wilderness of this World, and crossed over the Jordan of Death, and landed on that peaceful shore, and met your Lord in the air; where guardian Angels shall conduct you to happiness, beyond your wages, beyond your thoughts, above your understandings, and above the highest heavens; to a participation of the joys of God, and the inheritance of Christ; when all your sorrows shall be turned into delights, 'your persecutions into a crown, the cross into a throne, poverty into riches; losses, and affronts, and inconveniences, and death, into sceptres, and hymns, and halleluiahs.'

## THE DECALOGUE.

### SERMON LIV.

*Matth. xix, 17.* — IF THOU WILT ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP  
THE COMMANDMENTS.

THIS WAS the reply of Jesus Christ to the amiable young Jewish Ruler; importing that, if a person shall obey the Commandments, in spirit and in truth; if he shall prove this obedience, by not loving the world, more than he loves God; he shall enter into eternal happiness.

Although the Ten Commandments were primarily addressed to the Jews, and therefore the reason alleged in the *fourth*, and the promise annexed to the *fifth*; yet, as the Jews were then the only church of God, the commands had equal regard to each succeeding Household of Faith. There is a difference between instituted appointments, and moral precepts; the latter being of immutable, and eternal validity. Some traces of the Moral Law are discoverable by our natural reason, and the whole accords with it. It has its basis in the nature of God, and of man; in the relations which men bear to him, and to each other; and in the duties which result from them; therefore, it is universally obligatory. The motives of our obedience may differ from those of the Jews, yet the matter of the injunction is the same. Think not, says Christ, that I am come to destroy the Law, that is, the Moral Law; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the

least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Do we then make void the Law through Faith? asks St Paul. God forbid! he replies; yea, we establish the Law. The Moral Law was commented upon, and explained upon unalterable principles by our Saviour, in his Sermon on the Mount. If, at first view, the Decalogue appear an imperfect system, not exhibiting each feature, but only the broad outlines of morals; enjoining the great duties merely, and prohibiting those glaring vices, which most pollute the heart, and injure the peace of society; yet, by an enlarged exposition, it may comprehend, not only all the duties of Moral Religion, but also most of the precepts, and the graces of Evangelical Righteousness; because we cannot love God, without loving every display made of his Mediatorial Providence. Thus is the Law, that came by Moses, hinged together with the Grace and Truth, that came by Jesus Christ.

The Ten Commandments are divided into two parts, from being originally written by the finger of God on Two Tables of Stone. The four first, or first table, direct more particularly our duty to God; the six last, or second table, our duty to man, and to ourselves; although, accurately speaking, all duties are equally owed to God. The Commandments have their place according to the dignity of the duties commanded; that is, those which regard God, have the pre-eminence of those, which relate to man; being disposed according to the heinousness of the sins forbidden. They comprehend the three different degrees of sinning, in deed, in word, and in desires. They are addressed in the singular number, because every person is individually concerned. Each prohibition implies a positive duty. Where a duty is enjoined, there the contrary practice is forbidden; and where any vice is forbidden, there the contrary virtue is commanded; so also are all the helps, means and instruments; the causes, occasions and invitations; that lead to or from any virtue or vice, commanded or forbidden.



It is now proposed, briefly to explain, and apply each separate command in the Decalogue, in their natural order.

**I. WORSHIP GOD.** This command is in form of a prohibition, yet requires something positive. 1. It enjoins upon us that we should not acknowledge more than one God; and, 2. That we should worship the true God only. It is placed foremost in the decalogue, for our obedience in all things depends upon it. A violation of this law is high treason against the Majesty of Heaven.

Now, 'though you have not atheistically denied the Being of a God, or wickedly renounced him by apostacy; yet have you not loved, desired, and delighted in other things more than in God? or, have you not feared man, and dreaded the displeasure of the world, more than God? or, have you not trusted in men, and relied upon the world, more than upon God? Have you not despaired of God's mercy? or, by presuming too much upon it, encouraged yourself in sin? Have you not been unthankful for mercies received; or, have you not ascribed the glory and honour of what you now enjoy, to yourself, more than to God?' If so, you have broken this commandment.

**II. SHUN IDOLS.** The second command bears a near relation to the first; the former forbids polytheism, the latter idolatry; both of which applied to the ancient heathen, rather than to Christians. This states the manner, as the first did the object, of religious worship; and consists of two parts, a precept, and its sanction. The precept is in negative terms, but includes also a positive duty. The sanction is of two sorts; 1. by way of commination; 2. by way of encouragement. This command forbids all low apprehensions of God, and enjoins a worship and service suited to his perfections, and honourable to his name.

Now 'though you have not worshipped God by images, yet have you not entertained gross and false conceptions of him? or, have you not wilfully omitted coming to church, or to public lectures, when you had no just occa-

sion to hinder you? or, have you not rudely, or irreverently, or wantonly behaved yourself during the time of divine service? or, have you not wilfully refused to come to the Lord's Supper, when you have been called to it? or, have you not rashly and unadvisedly received the sacraments without a preparation? or, have you not broken any vows, and resolutions, which you then made? If so, have you kept this commandment?

III. BE NOT PROFANE. Here we have again, 1. a negative precept, which includes a positive duty; 2. a threatening added to enforce it. This command enjoins reverence to God's name, and forbids all rash and unlawful vows, and hypocrisy; and all witnessing God in common conversation; but the capital transgression of it is perjury, whereby an appeal is made to the all-searching God for the truth of what is asserted. Yet legal oaths are not forbidden, being sanctioned by Scripture, by divine examples, and by reason. A civil oath is to be held in respect, as a service to society, and also a great restraint in private life.

If now you 'have not openly blasphemed the name of God, yet have you not lightly, or irreverently spoken of him? or, have you never profanely jested upon, or abused his holy places or persons, or any thing else dedicated to his service? or, have you never taken God's name in vain, by common swearing and cursing? or, if you have not taken false and unlawful oaths, have you not broken your own vows and promises, especially your baptismal?' If any of us have done thus, have we not violated this commandment?

IV. KEEP THE SABBATH. This command contains, 1. a precept; and, 2. a reason enforcing it. This is the only one, in which we are bidden to *remember* our duty; it being a positive precept, and not imprinted, as the others, by nature upon the heart. The Sabbath was changed by the Apostles from the *seventh*, to the *first* day of the week, in honour of our Saviour's resurrection from the sepulchre. A Sabbath is the best means of preserving a sense of God, and religion, in the minds of men. It

implies, not a carnal, but a spiritual rest; and a respite from toil for the labouring beast. This commandment requires that our affairs be previously so arranged, that secular concerns may not interfere with the day. It prohibits all trading, paying wages, settling accounts, writing worldly letters, reading books on ordinary subjects, unnecessary journeying, excursions, and visitings, and all dissipation. It requires private, social, and public worship, serious self-examination, perusal of the scriptures, instruction of children and servants, meditation, and pious conversation.

Now 'have none of you neglected the worship of God upon his Sabbaths? have you not spent part thereof in vain sports, idle discourses, visits, and other unnecessary businesses? or, have you not suffered others to profane the Sabbath, when it was in your power to restrain them from so doing?' If so, you have not kept this commandment.

This ends the First Table, which is found to be very extensive, spiritual, reasonable, and beneficial.

**V. RESPECT THY PARENTS.** This is the first of the Second Table, and included a temporal promise to the Jews; not, perhaps, of private long life, but of national stability in the land of Canaan. This command contains an abstract of relative duties; enjoining obedience to our parents natural and legislative, as, next to God, they are to have the pre-eminence. This relation most nearly resembles that to our heavenly Father, and all other relations spring from that to our parents. We are herein bound to love their persons, to respect their characters, counsels, and instructions; to consult their interest, credit, and comfort; to conceal their infirmities, bear with their tempers and humours; to alleviate their sorrows, and to rejoice their hearts; and, if they are incapacitated, to labour for their support. This command also, by parity of reason, enjoins the duty of parents to their children, both of precept, and example.

Let me now ask, 'have none of you ever been stubborn, irreverent, and undutiful towards your parents,

rejecting their counsels, despising their government, or coveting their estates before their death? or, have you contributed towards their necessities when they were in want, and you had to help them? or, have not any of you been disloyal to your governors, unfaithful to your masters, refractory and uncandid to your minister, or peevish and unkind to your friends and companions? Can you all say, you have kept this command?

VI. TAKE NOT LIFE. This commandment requires us to love our neighbour as ourselves, in respect of his *person* and *life*; forbidding murder, which is the greatest injury one can do another, as the damage is the most irreparable. This commandment condemns duelling, suicide, and the slave-trade; but exempts from crime, the killing in execution of justice, an enemy in time of war, in self defence, and accidentally, without enmity; and excepts magistrates, witnesses, jurors, and executioners, who conscientiously fulfil the public laws for public good. This command prohibits to maim, or assault another; to tempt to crimes which destroy the constitution; to break the hearts of parents by profligacy; to entice to enterprises which shorten life; and to refuse food, or raiment, or medicine, to the poor. It likewise forbids the more heinous murder of the *soul*, by seducing to sin, by bad example, by poisonous principles, by religious persecution, or by withholding instruction; and thus includes a solemn warning to ministers to be faithful.

Now, ‘if you have not actually taken away the life of any person, yet, have you not made your neighbour’s life grievous by oppression, rage, and violence against him? or, have you not by fighting, or quarrelling, wounded his person? or, have you not tempted him by any vice, or intemperance, to destroy his health, and so shorten his days? or, have you not, by false and contumelious speeches, wounded his good name and reputation? or, have you not, by your own luxury and intemperance in eating and drinking, been accessory to your own death?’ If so, you have broken the spirit of this commandment.

**VII. BE CONTINENT.** This regulates our love to our neighbours, in respect to their purity, and domestic comfort. Taken in its most extensive sense, this command forbids all those crimes of black infidelity and incontinence, which breed confusion in families ; and which are collateral to marriage, polygamy, and divorce. It also forbids all lasciviousness in discourse, imaginations, or desires ; and all temptations of alluring apparel, of impure books, and indecorous pictures, or statues. It requires cleanness of body and soul, in secret as well as before men.

If now you ' have escaped the grosser acts of impurity, yet have you not conceived sin in your heart, and neglected the means to preserve your own, and another's virtue ? or, have you not by luxury and inebriety, or any licentious thought, defiled your soul ? or, have you not accustomed yourself to unseemly talking, jesting, and indiscreet looks and behaviour, in common intercourse ? Have we never broken this commandment in thought, word, or deed ?

**VIII. BE HONEST.** By this command, our civil rights and properties are guarded against open or secret invasion ; as, in the two foregoing, our persons and relations against violence and lust. It forbids all bargains which impose on the ignorant, credulous, or needy ; any abuse of confidence, extortion, exorbitant gain, deceitful combinations to enhance the price of goods or labour, or to lower the wages of the poor. It also condemns those ravagers of nations, who defy human justice ; those robbers, who defraud the public by embezzlement, or smuggling ; those who evade payment by insolvent laws ; who live beyond their income ; who unnecessarily subsist on charity ; or withhold aid from the necessitous.

Now, ' if you have never been guilty of common and public stealing, yet, have you been true and just in all your dealings ? or, have you not contracted debts, which you were conscious to yourself that you were not able to pay, or make restitution ? or, have you not wasted your own, or others' estates, by riotous living ? or, have you not by violence and oppression exacted of your inferiors,

or by unlawful usury taken advantage of their necessities ?' If so, you have broken this command.

**IX. BE NOT PERJURED.** This is the law of love, as respects our neighbour's reputation. Witness is a judicial term, importing testimony in courts of judicature to the prejudice of the life or fortune of others. It has a further meaning to signify all extra-judicial testimonies, affecting the interest or character of our neighbours. It contains a caution to juries, and judges. This commandment forbids the invention of slanderous reports ; the spreading of the reports of others' framing, when suspected not to be true, or to be aggravated ; or, if true, when there is no occasion ; and all stories which result from pride, self-preference, malevolence, or conceited affectation of wit or humour. It forbids the ascribing good actions to bad motives, and vending family secrets ; especially, all printed lies, misquoting authors, misreporting their words and actions ; in fine, all bitter sarcasm, officious backbitings, and even envy of others' just praises.

Suffer me now to ask, whether, ' if none of you have sworn falsely before the magistrate against any man, yet have you not accustomed yourself to lying and slandering ? or, have you not accused your neighbour unjustly ? or, have you not concealed the truth of another, when justice and charity obliged you to give evidence of it ? or, have you not unjustly sought to uphold or to blast your own or others' credit ?' Have none of us infringed upon this commandment ?

**X. COVET NOT.** This command is the hedge of all the rest ; it is placed last, not only as a supplement and recapitulation, but a guard to the others. This comprises the utmost spirituality of the Law, and a due observance of this makes the others easy. This restrains not only the external commission of sin, but those internal springs and desires, which give it birth. All coveting is not sinful, but only the inordinacy of the wish. We must not even desire what is withheld by the providence of God. This commandment forbids discontent, and all excessive

love of wealth, or grandeur ; and requires contentment, moderation in our wishes of worldly things, and acquiescence to the will of heaven.

Now, 'have you never secretly complained against the providence of God, as if others had too much, and you too little ? or, have you not by unlawful means endeavoured to deprive others of their goods and prosperity ? or, have you laboured truly and faithfully to get your own living, and to be content with that state of life, unto which it pleased God to appoint you ?' Can we all say, that we have kept this last command in spirit and in truth ?

#### REMARKS.

The foregoing Ten Commandments, or Compendium of Holy Law, are commented upon in all the preceptive parts of Scripture ; and the substance of them is condensed by our Saviour into Two Great Commandments : Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, soul, strength, and mind. This is the first, and great commandment. And the second is like unto it : Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ; that is, Whatsoever ye would, that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them. On these two commandments hang all the Law, and the Prophets.

But, besides our duty to God, which requires us to believe in him, to fear him, to love him, to worship him, to trust him, to thank him, to honour him, to serve him, and to reverence his Holy Word ; and besides our duty to our Neighbour, which includes our conduct to our parents, natural and civil, to our children, to our teachers, to our superiors, and to our inferiors ; there are other duties, to Ourselves, which do not so evidently result from the former ; such as, not only bodily, but mental chastity, purity, temperance, and industry. A high degree of moral perfection requires, also, a timely abstraction from the world, and elevation above it ; the cherishing of humility and meekness ; a restraint on selfishness ; the forgiveness of injuries, and love even of our enemies ; the

exercise of gratitude, and the remembrance of the poor ; and the seeking the praise of God, rather than the praise of men ; in fine, the expansion of selfishness into universal benevolence.

Now, all these Commandments being not only reasonable and equitable, but salutary ; will not a prudent regard to our own interest induce us to observe them ? In the ordinary allotment of things, does not obedience to divine precepts conduce to health, to a prolonged life, public utility, and domestic comfort ? The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom ; a good understanding have all they, that do his commandments. He who serves God is the true wise man ; and, he can want nothing, who has God for his friend. Every instance of God's beneficence to us is a persuasive argument for our obedience ; and if we withhold it, will witness against us. No one of God's laws can be violated, without injuring ourselves, as well as dishonouring the Lawgiver. Is it not just for a ruler to punish his rebellious subjects, a judge his convicted criminals, a father his undutiful children, and a master his slothful servants ; and is it not likewise equitable for the benevolent Creator to take vengeance on his incorrigible enemies ? Let him therefore that standeth, take heed lest he fall ; let him take warning, not to forfeit the favour of his bountiful Father by disobedience. Let us all be in earnest to judge our own souls, that we may escape the condemnation of the final Judge. Let us begin to think less of our virtues, and more of our sins. It is the privilege of a reflecting being, to seclude himself, at devoted seasons, from the allurements of pleasure and business, and to turn his meditations inward to commune with his own heart. Whatever imperfections we may discover in our nature, it is the concern of virtue and religion to mend them. The sensual man is like 'a hungry man, who dreameth that he eateth ; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty.' No undevout man ever found acceptance with God. The wicked have no homes purchased for them in heaven ; no guardian angel to escort their bereaved souls to their friends in glory ; no Saviour to welcome them at the resurrection of their bodies ; but, with



awful consternation, must they at last hear the despised Jesus denounce them to a cheerless, hopeless, agonizing condemnation. Come then, one and all ; come, all ye imperfect saints, and reforming sinners, to the compassionate Saviour ; to Him, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life ; and on our bended souls let us unite and pray : ' Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline us to keep all these thine holy Laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.'

# BELIEF AND UNBELIEF.

## SERMON LV.

*St James iv, 8.*—DRAW NIGH TO GOD, AND HE WILL DRAW  
NIGH TO YOU.

WHAT a glorious promise is that, from the first sainted Bishop of Jerusalem. If we, weak, imperfect children of the earth draw nigh to the most high and holy Father in the Heaven of Heavens, he will draw nigh to us. Wonderful and humbling, yet animating condescension!

In the ensuing sermon, I propose to exhibit the duty and utility of that Belief in Revelation, that drawing nigh to God, which induces Obedience ; and the impiety and detriment of that Unbelief, that withdrawing from God, which induces Disobedience ; primarily, as it regards the character and situation of man in this world ; and ultimately, as it regards his hopes and happiness in a future world.

### I. THERE MUST BE SOME COMMON OBJECT OF REGARD.

‘ If our supreme affection terminate on ourselves, and no being, created or uncreated, be regarded but for our own sakes, it is manifest there can be no union beyond the sphere in which other beings become voluntarily subservient to our wishes. The Supreme Being, if our plan do not comport with his, will be continually thwarting us ; and so we shall be always at variance with *him*. And as to created beings, those individuals whom we desire to be subservient to our wishes, having the same right, and the same inclination to require that we should be subservient

to theirs, will also be continually thwarting us ; and so we shall always be at variance with *them*. In short, nothing but an endless succession of discord and confusion can be the consequence.' Thus, there can be no union, without a *common object* of regard.

II. WHO IS SO NATURALLY THIS OBJECT OF REGARD, AS OUR CREATOR ?

1. The benevolence of God is strictly infinite ; is ever in action ; and pervades his entire moral character. The *original* and *main design* of each particular thing seems evidently to be benevolent ; although all the blessings experienced by mankind are bestowed on sinful beings. We are prone to diminish both the number, and the greatness, of our blessings, because they are so *common*. 'Our health, food and raiment, are means of enjoyment to us daily, throughout our lives. Our friends and connexions also continually, and extensively contribute to our happiness. The pleasantness of seasons ; the beauty and grandeur of the earth and heavens ; the various kinds of agreeable sounds ever fluctuating on our ears ; the immensely various and delightful uses of language ; the interchanges of thought and affection ; the peace and safety afforded by the institution of governments ; the power and agreeableness of motion and activity ; the benefit and comfort afforded by the arts and sciences, particularly by those of writing, printing, and numbering ; and the continual gratification found in employment ; are all, in a sense, daily and hourly sources of good to man ; all furnished, either directly or indirectly, by the hand of God.'

2. Even for the evils, which men suffer in the present world, God has furnished many alleviations, and many remedies. Besides, the evils which men are called to endure, are no doubt less than they deserve for their sins. Even the best men stand in need of afflictions. *Before I was afflicted*, says the Psalmist, *I went astray ; but now have I kept thy word*. The vanities of this world, riches, and pleasures, and honours, are apt to allure and engross the heart. Trials and bereavements show us their unsubstantial, unsatisfying nature ; 'pluck us by the arm in our downward course, and conduct us back to safety and

peace.' God doth *not willingly afflict, nor grieve the children of men.*

3. What has not God done to enjoin and procure the veneration, love, and obedience of sinful man, in sending them a Divine Revelation? Behold the succession of prophets, the grandeur of miracles, the humiliation, the enduring life and agonizing death, the breaking from the grave, rising on high, and constant intercession, of the Saviour. Behold the sweet influences of the Spirit of Grace. And behold the strong foundation, and beautiful superstructure of his Church, which is gradually rising from the earth to the heavens. Surely, therefore, the *Creator* should be our supreme *Object of Regard.*

### III. THE BENEFITS OF BELIEVING AND OBEYING.

It is not only our duty to reverence and love our Creator, but it will be for our interest thus to do, in both worlds.

1. It will be for our interest *in this world.* Not only does belief produce virtue, and unbelief vice; but also, virtue produces belief, and vice unbelief. This sentiment is forcibly exemplified by *Dr Andrew Fuller.* 'How is it,' he asks, 'that in countries where Christianity has made progress, men have almost universally agreed in reckoning a true Christian, and an amiable, open, modest, chaste, conscientious, and benevolent character, as the same thing? How is it also, that to say of a man, *he rejects the Bible*, is nearly the same thing, in the account of people in general, as to say, he is a man of a dissolute life? If there were not a general connexion between these things, public opinion would not so generally associate them. Individuals, and even parties, may be governed by prejudice; but public opinion of character is seldom far from the truth. Besides, the prejudices of merely nominal Christians, so far as my observation extends, are equally strong, if not stronger, against those Christians, who are distinguished by their devout and serious regard to the Scriptures, than against professed infidels. How is it then to be accounted for, that although they will call them fanatics, enthusiasts, and other unpleasant names, yet it is very rare that they reckon them immoral? If, as is sometimes the case, they accuse them

of unworthy motives, and insinuate that in secret they are as wicked as others, either such insinuations are not seriously believed, or if they be, the party is considered as insincere in his profession. No man thinks that genuine christianity consists with a wicked life, open or secret. But the ideas of infidelity and immorality are associated in the public mind ; and the association is clear and strong ; so much so, as to become a ground of action. Whom do men ordinarily choose for umpires, trustees, guardians, and the like ? Doubtless they endeavour to select persons of intelligence ; but if to this be added *Christian principle*, is it not of weight in these cases ? It is seldom known, I believe, but that a serious intelligent Christian, whose situation in the world renders him conversant with its concerns, will have his hands full of employment. Ask bankers, merchants, tradesmen, and others who are frequently looking out for persons of probity, whom they may place in situations of trust, in whose hands they would choose to confide their property ? They might object, and with good reason, to persons whose religion rendered them pert, conceited, and idle ; but would they not prefer one who really makes the Bible the rule of his life, to one who professedly rejects it ? The common practice in these cases affords a sufficient answer. Thus does it appear, that a believer and a good man, and an unbeliever and a bad man, are synonymous terms ; and that *God draws nigh to believers in this world*.

2. But this belief must be, not merely *speculative*, but *operative*. 'It is a distinguishing property of the Bible, that all its precepts aim directly *at the heart*. It never goes about to form the mere exterior of man. To merely external duties it is a stranger. It forms the lives of men no otherwise than by forming their dispositions. It never addresses itself to their vanity, selfishness, or any other corrupt propensity. You are not pressed to consider what men will think of you, or how it will affect your temporal interest ; but what is right, and what is necessary to your eternal well-being. If you comply with its precepts, you must *be*, and not merely *seem to be*. It is the heart that is required ; and all the different prescrib-

ed forms of worship and obedience are but so many modifications, or varied expressions of it.'

3. It will be not merely for our interest, to draw nigh to God in such a manner as that God may draw nigh to us, but it will be for our *happiness*. External interest and internal happiness are very far from meaning the same thing. 'But if nothing deserve the name of happiness, which does not include *peace of mind*, all criminal pleasure is at once excluded. Could a life of unchastity, intrigue, dishonour, and disappointed pride, like that of Rousseau, be a happy life? No; amidst the brilliancy of his talents, remorse, shame, conscious meanness, and the dread of an hereafter, must corrode his heart, and render him a stranger to peace. Contrast with the life of this man that of Howard. Pious, temperate, just, and benevolent, he lived for the good of mankind. His happiness consisted in *serving his generation by the will of God*. If all men were like Rousseau, the world would be much more miserable than it is: if all were like Howard, it would be much more happy. Rousseau, governed by the love of fame, is fretful and peevish, and never satisfied with the treatment he receives: Howard, governed by the love of mercy, shrinks from applause, with this modest and just reflection: 'Alas, our best performances have such a mixture of sin and folly, that praise is vanity, and presumption, and pain to a thinking mind.' Rousseau, after a life of debauchery and shame, confesses it to the world, and makes a merit of his confession, and even presumptuously supposes that it will avail him before the Judge of all. Howard, after a life of singular devotedness to God, and benevolence to men, accounted himself an unprofitable servant, leaving this for his motto, his last testimony, *Christ is my hope*. Can there be any doubt, which of the two was the happiest man?' Thus, if we look into the heart of man, we shall see the happiness of virtue, and the unhappiness of vice, *even in this life*.

4. As to the benefits of believing and obeying the Gospel, as it regards a *future world*, I shall now say nothing; taking it for granted that, in a community so well instructed, the sentiment admits not of a doubt.

## REMARKS.

We have now seen the beauty and benefit of belief, and the deformity and danger of unbelief, whether considered in reference to time, or to eternity. We have seen, that *there must be a common object of regard; that it is reasonable that our Creator should be that object; and that consequently, it is not only our duty, but will be for our interest, to reverence and obey his Gospel.*

If mankind at large would only draw nigh to God, so that he would draw nigh to them, what an animating, and healthful moral change would spread over the face of the earth. Yet how natural, and how simple is the duty required. 'The morality which the Scriptures inculcate is summed up in these few words: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind, and strength; and thy neighbour as thyself. This single principle is competent to the government of all intelligent nature. It is a band that would hold together the whole rational creation; and diffuse peace, order and happiness, wherever it existed.

'If mankind loved God supremely, there would be no idolatry upon earth, nor any of its attendant abominations; no profaning the name of God, nor making a gain of godliness; no opposing, corrupting, perverting, nor abusing the truth; no perjuries, nor hypocrisies; no despising of those that are good; no arrogance, ingratitude, pride, nor self complacency under the smiles of Providence; and no murmuring, heart-rising, sullenness, nor suicide under its frowns. Love would render it their meat and drink to fear, honour, and obey him, and induce them to take every thing well at his hands.

'And if they loved their fellow creatures as themselves, for his sake, there would be no wars, rivalships, antipathies, nor breach of treaties between nations; no envyings, strifes, wrongs, slanders, duels, litigations, nor intrigues between neighbours; no flattering complaisance, nor persecuting bitterness in religion; no deceit, fraud, nor over-reachings in trade; no tyranny, venality, haughtiness, nor oppression among the great; no envy, discontent, disaf-

faction, cabals, nor evil devisings among common people.' Such would be the glorious effect of universal love to God, and love to man, which are the sum and substance of christian morality.

Let us then, my brethren and sisters, resolve to *do our part* towards producing this beautiful moral change in the world; and thus, not only set a good example to others, but draw down blessings upon ourselves. If we have sinned, let us sin no more. Say not thou, I will hide myself from the Lord, I shall not be remembered among so many people: for what is my soul among such an infinite number of creatures? Such a man only feareth the eyes of men, and knoweth not that the eyes of the Lord are ten thousand times brighter than the sun, beholding all the ways of men. If we meet with an unbeliever, let us compare his life with that of the believer, and thus judge between them. The practice will be a plain commentary upon the doctrine. By their fruits ye shall know them. Let us turn from evil doers, and follow those who do well. If we are in prosperity, let us bless God. When you glorify the Lord, exalt him as much as you can; for even yet will he far exceed; and when you exalt him, put forth all your strength, and be not weary; for you can never go far enough. And if we are in adversity, let us also bless God. Fear not, my son, that thou art made poor; for thou hast much wealth, if thou fear God, and depart from all sin. Look at the generations of old, and see; did ever any trust in the Lord, and was confounded? or did any abide in his fear, and was forsaken? or whom did he ever despise, that called upon him?

Finally. In whatever state we are placed by Providence, let us remember, that if we draw nigh to our great creating, redeeming, and sanctifying Father in the Heavens, by a life of faith and obedience; he will draw nigh to us, his dutiful children on the earth, both in temporal and spiritual blessings. Let us ever remember that, 'if we take care of our duties, God will take care of our happiness.' Let this last sentence be, not only as a tablet in our hearts, but as a frontlet between our eyes; that whe-



ther we go out, or whether we come in ; whether in the church, or in the house ; in the field, or in the street ; at home, or abroad ; among strangers, or among friends ; we may ever read and follow its golden admonition : ‘ *If we take care of our duties, God will take care of our happiness.* ’ Then may the Believer, when God thus draws nigh unto his soul, and fills it with his rich and abiding peace, and the full assurance of hope, exclaim, in the confiding triumph of his heart, with the devout COWPER :

‘ Give what thou canst, without **THEE** we are poor ;  
And with **THEE** rich, take what thou wilt away.’

# HAPPINESS OF HEAVEN.

## SERMON LVI.

*Rev. vii, 13.* — WHAT ARE THESE, WHICH ARE ARRAYED IN  
WHITE ROBES?

IF ADAM had not fallen, man perhaps had enjoyed a happy immortality in an earthly Paradise ; or been translated, like Enoch and Elijah, without death to heaven. But now, this world is a world of wo. On one side of the churchyard-gate stands SIN ; and haunts our lives with those vultures of the mind — disdainful Anger, Misfortune with her baleful train, skulking Shame, ghostly Fear, pining Love, Jealousy gnawing his own breast, wan Envy, faded Care, bitter Scorn, Sorrow with her piercing dart, hard Unkindness with her altered eye, moping Melancholy, grim-visaged comfortless Despair, grinning Infamy, keen-wasting Remorse, moody Madness, and the funeral cry of screaming Horror ; these are the painful family of Sin. On the other side of the churchyard-gate stands DEATH ; and sends forth his grisly troop to fetch us to his drear domains — ghastly spasm, qualms of heart-sick agony, convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs, cholic pangs, pining atrophy, wide-wasting pestilence, dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums ; this fires the veins, that rives the joints ; this strains the labouring sinew, that gnaws deeper into the vitals ; one of his train famishes us by pinching Poverty, another brushes us by the hand of rough Mischance ; one burns the body from the soul by a fever, and another drieth it away by slow-consuming age. All tells, that man was made to mourn. In this life, the social man mourns over the pains of

another ; the unsocial man repines over his own woes. Now, all must wade through the bitter waters of death, to arrive at the Haven of Rest.

But, *What are these, which are arrayed in white robes?* Those, who were arrayed in white robes, were the saints in glory, seen by Saint John the Divine, in his Apocalyptic Vision. Revelation declares, in one place, I knew a man, whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth ; such an one caught up to the third heaven, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. In another place, That neither the eye, nor the ear, nor the heart of man, hath seen, or heard, or conceived the things, that God hath laid up for them that love him. Revelation, indeed, is full of assurances, that a Heaven of Happiness exists for the saints. Yet few inquire, what is the nature, and degree, of that felicity, which is the consequence of the death of the second Adam. As the subject is both pleasing and useful, it is proposed now to treat, in their order, with due reverence, and relying upon scriptural inferences, of the *Residence*, the *Character*, the *Employments*, and the *Enjoyments*, of Saints in Heaven.

I. *The Residence.* Heaven ought to be considered as a *state*, rather than a *place*. Yet, in whatever part of the Universe it may be, all revealed allusions to it are immensely grand, and gloriously majestic. It is called the Celestial Eden ; the Canaan of the Skies ; a City whose builder and whose maker is God ; conceived by the all-knowing Mind, and fashioned by the all-doing Hand. There reign the eternal Jehovah, disarmed of all his terrors ; and the exalted Saviour, in his own glorified body ; surrounded by the worshipping hierarchy ; 'the commanding attitude of the Archangels, the serene brows of the Seraphs, and the beauteous locks of the Cherubs ;' and by the innumerable saints, clothed in the white robes of innocence, with harps of praises, and palms of victory in their hands, and crowns of glory upon their heads ; and with countenances glowing with youth and immortality. Heaven is the birthplace of all that is magnificent, and

amiable ; the everlasting residence of truth, righteousness, and felicity.

But no words can convey so adequate an idea of its sublimity, and splendour, and purity, as the inspired emblematic Vision of Saint John. The venerable John was carried away in the spirit by an Angel, to an exceedingly high mountain, and was shown that great city, the holy New Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God. As it was pendent in the air, it glowed as a bride adorned for her husband. To show its guardian security, it had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. To denote the free access of all true believers, of whatever climate, or language ; on the East were three gates, on the North three gates, on the South three gates, and on the West three gates. To declare the sure ground of acceptable faith, the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. Its immense capaciousness intimated, that none who are worthy should be excluded. The city lay four square, and the length was as long as the breadth, twelve thousand furlongs ; that is, fifteen hundred miles on each side. In its cubical perfection, the length and the breadth and height of it were equal. To denote its magnificent garniture, and endurable stability, the building of the wall of it was of jasper ; and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The basis of the city was represented by the most scarce, and princely ornaments of earthly ambition ; the first foundation was jasper ; the second, sapphire ; the third, a chalcedony ; the fourth, an emerald ; the fifth, sardonyx ; the sixth, sardius ; the seventh, chrysolite ; the eighth, beryl ; the ninth, a topaz ; the tenth, a chrysoprasus ; the eleventh, a jacinth ; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls ; every several gate was of one pearl ; and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And John saw no temple therein ; for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, were the temple of it. And the city had no

need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it ; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb was the light thereof. The gates of it were not shut at all by day ; for there should be no night there. And there should in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie ; but they who are written in the Lamb's book of life. And the angel showed John a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God, and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the Tree of Life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month ; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there should be no more curse ; but the Throne of God, and of the Lamb, should be in it ; and his servants should serve him, and they should see his face, and his name should be in their foreheads. Blessed are they, that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

II. *The Character.* The saints were once children of disobedience, but are now loyal. They were once lost, but are now found. They are all brethren, being of one Father, one Saviour, one church, one blood. They are just men made perfect ; perfect, not as the Infinite Mind, incapable of accession, but re-impressed with the image of God, and made like unto the angels of heaven. Their bodies, no more obtuse and sluggish, but spiritual like the mind, are not liable to error, or decay, or weariness. Being no longer clogged and impeded by gross materials, they are become pure, and alert, and glorious ; all intellect, and all heart. Knowledge has lit up new energies in their souls, and love new affections in their breasts ; and as once they knew only in part, now they know even as they are known. Not only is the mind adequate to form vast conceptions, and to enjoy most exquisitely ; but the will is rectified, as well as the judgment ; and the affections, confined to worthy objects, no longer occasion any struggle between inclination and duty. Virtue being the beauty of their minds, and all

their infirmities and inconveniences being left behind, and being freed from any unlawful desires, they are incomparably glorious in the light and love of the presence of God.

III. *The Employments.* The saints will not exist in a state of mere passive recipiency ; but, like the angels, will be full of activity, the true rest of the soul. The ultimate end, and delightful duty, for which intelligent man was made, were to worship God, and to receive enjoyment. As, in our Father's house are many mansions, and in the firmament one star differeth from another star in glory ; so, in heaven will be diversified gradations of offices and occupations ; all honourable and useful ; but allotted according to the different moral and religious attainments and capacities of the saints. Yet each one will be fixed where he himself would have chosen to be ; each situation being contrived and adjusted by Wisdom which cannot mistake, and Love which cannot be partial ; so as to form one vast, perfect system of perpetually advancing good.

1. One employment of the saints will be, to contemplate the works, and character of God. The august and elevated study of the World of Matter, and the World of Mind, with Jesus Christ and holy angels for teachers, will be a glorious recreation to the intellect ; which will then know, more than it can now imagine. The saints will learn from the angels the events of heaven, the rebellion of the devils, once the highest, now the lowest of created intelligences ; and the events of earth, the tremendous fall in the garden, and the devoted agony on the mount. They will see God as he is, wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working ; and looking back through the immense and complicated scheme of Providence, they will see all things fitted for their final ends ; nothing defective, nothing superfluous ; but all necessary, kind, and wise. Then will they learn the history of all the ages of the church, and the particular afflictions, and temptations, the faith, and hope, and perseverance, and victory of the righteous. Then will all the mysterious circumstances of life be disclosed, and it will appear that

all were but parts of one grand and benevolent, natural and moral whole ; that whatever was, was right.

2. Another employment will be to praise God. The inhabitants of heaven will be engaged in the princely and priestly exercises of offering sweet incense upon the altar of the sanctuary. No individual will be unemployed, or useless ; but every one in his place, serviceable and happy ; each rendering a prompt and willing obedience. Perfect love will cast out fear, and unmingled gratitude will make their services a delight. There will be no contest between pride and love, when many, who are now trodden under foot, and despised for their low but honest occupations, shall be exalted to dignities ; but all will harmonize in yielding supreme reverence, supreme admiration, supreme gratitude, and confidence, and love to God, and the Saviour ; crying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, who wast, and art, and art to come ! And unto Him, who loved us, be blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, forever and ever !

3. The saints will moreover be engaged in rendering each other happy. Heaven is a world of friendship. On earth, a faithful man who can find ? But in that world, they are all brethren to each other. The wall of partition between different ages, and countries, and sects, is broken down ; and among them all, there is not one enemy, or stranger, or lukewarm heart. Being the companions of guardian angels and ministering spirits, they have no private concerns, but all is for the common good. Thus there is no wish for transfer, or change, but every one is satisfied with his own place and portion. The saints have no jealousies, no emulation, no hatred, no alienation, no degeneracy, no treachery, no reserve, no suspicions, no wishes to conceal any thing ; but, on the contrary, are all frankness, and can see into each other's breasts ; and these innocent and amiable sources of endearment will never suffer change or diminution.

IV. *The Enjoyments.* The felicity of the saints will be derived from their magnificent residence, their perfect characters, and their glorious and delightful employments.

Their rewards will be in a measure according to their works, and their faith ; all being rewards, not of debt, but of mercy ; and all transcendently above their merits. All the past dispensations of God will be seen to be so perfect, that there will be no solicitude about the future. O glorious state ! where a weak and corrupt body shall no longer burthen and impair the soul. Where the inmost serenity of the perfectly pure mind cannot be disturbed ; where pride and jealousy shall never rankle in the breast ; nor resentment, nor temptation, seduce our passions astray. Where there is no voice of threatening, nor reproach of conscience ; no loss, nor risk, nor suspense, nor disgust ; no lusts without, nor enemies within. But where all is uninterrupted quiet, harmony of wishes, sympathy of affections, and delightful recollections ; and where all around, participating in this holy nature, will be engaged only in contributing to this happiness. O blessed state ! in which there will be an union between the saints and the Saviour ; and where the angels will rejoice over them, and join in their joy. Where they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, and there shall be no more sorrow, nor crying, neither any more pain, and the last tear shall be wiped away from every eye. Where no parent shall mourn over a deceased child, nor changes any more separate them from those they love. O happy state ! where the saints will walk upon the green banks, and eat of the Tree of Life, and drink of the living fountains. Where the mind will be absorbed in stupendous wonder ; the ear be strung to the concord of sweet sounds, the music of the spheres ; the eye be filled with grandeur and glory ; and all will be devotion to the heart, and beatific vision to the imagination. To those who walk in the light of that happy world, there will be day without setting, yet no drowsiness ; but quickened by the smiles of infinite complacency, an ' ethereal, pervading warmth will spread through their frames, and vivid emotions of gratitude and love ' will glow in their breasts, and beam around their aspects in a halo of glory. All these superlative, and intense delights shall be, not only in possession, but in prospect ; not only not diminishing, but



perpetually enhancing. Everlasting joy shall be upon their heads, as the ransomed of the Lord

#### OBSERVATIONS.

The contemplation of the Happiness of Heaven should be a theme of consolation, and rapturous gratitude, to the Christian. 'What though,' asks an eloquent minister, 'what though poor in this world, when a heavenly inheritance is yours? What though you are despised among men, when you are the sons of God? That you are weak or sick in body, when your souls are recovered from the deadly disease of sin? That your enemies are victorious, when you shall overcome at last? That your relations die, when your heavenly Father, and all your spiritual kindred live?' If tribulations work for you a far more exceeding weight of glory, it is good to be afflicted. Tarry but a little while in the patience of faith, and you shall have cause to remember your misery no more. To him that overcometh, saith the Saviour, will I grant to sit with me in my throne; even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. Not one, however humble, or ignorant, or forsaken, shall be shut out. It doth not yet appear, what you shall be; for all things are yours, whether things present, or things to come; being joint-heirs to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Let Christians, therefore, rejoice evermore; rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad, because your names are written in heaven.

But Unbelievers, whose names are not written in heaven, can have no cause for rejoicing. However they may lord it over an earthly heritage, and fare sumptuously every day, and receive the flatteries of dependants; yet they have no cause of rational, lasting satisfaction. Dammocles might as well have exulted at his feast, while a naked sword was suspended over his head by a single hair. No. To be really happy, a man must become a Christian. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved. And to give evidence of this belief, one must

have a heavenly nature, very different from that of the world. He must be deeply sensible of sin, and of the vanity of earthly things. He must have a peculiar love for his fellow immortals; and must be chiefly engaged to procure an interest in heaven, not by languid, spiritless desires and prayers, but by a vigorous, solicitous, unwearying perseverance in duty. He must be willing that God's will be done on earth, as it is in heaven; and bind up in his heart, and practise with alacrity, those doctrines and precepts, which came down from heaven. While he thus commences a course of religious duty, he is in the road to felicity.

Finally, Let us all, by our correct faith, and blameless lives, endeavour to reach that holy, happy place. Let us all remember, that the angels above are trying to save us, and the devils below are working to destroy us; and that invisible guardian spirits are encamping about us, as witnesses of our actions; while there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth. Then, when Death shall break the bars of our earthly prison-house, we shall rise to meet our friends who have gone before us to their Father's country; where the husband shall meet the wife, and the lover his beloved; where children shall join their parents, and mothers their little infants; all *arrayed in the white robes* of joy, no more to part. Let the bereaved Christian remember, that there are no graves in heaven. Let also the worldly sinner reflect that, comparatively, there is nothing BRIGHT, there is nothing PURE, there is nothing TRUE, but HEAVEN.

END.

